لا الـه الا الله محمد رسـول الله

THE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM

A SOLUTION OF FIVE FUNDAMENTAL RELIGIOUS PROBLEMS FROM THE MUSLIM POINT OF VIEW

BY

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PREFACE

THE paper which now appears in the form of this booklet was originally written in Urdu by the late Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, the Promised Messiah and Mahdi and the founder of the Ahmadiyya movement in Islam, and it was read at the Great Religious Conference held at Lahore (Punjab), in December 1896, by one of his devoted votaries, the late Maulvi Abdul Karim. In the English language it first appeared in instalments in the *Review of Religions* in 1902 and 1903 when I was editing that paper. The paper discusses from a Muslim's point of view the five subjects selected for discussion by the conveners of the conference. These five subjects related to (1) the physical, moral and spiritual conditions of man, (2) the state of man in the after-life, (3) the real object of the existence of man and the means of its attainment, (4) the effect of actions in the present life and the life to come, and (5) the sources of Divine knowledge.

This little volume is primarily intended to help in the diffusion of the teachings of Islam in

the West. It lays no claim to give a comprehensive treatment of the Islamic doctrines, but within the narrow compass of the five subjects dealt with—and these are undoubtedly subjects of the most vital importance in any religion—the reader would meet with many true, profound original and inspiring ideas which should interest the Muslim and the non-Muslim alike. Though the religion of Islam has been so often vilified and misrepresented by a certain class of Christian writers that the 'darker side' of its picture is more likely to find acceptance with a reading public that persistently refuses to see any good in a religious system other than that to which it owes allegiance, the cloud of prejudice has of late been gradually dissipating before the light which has been thrown upon the history and teachings of Islam by the disinterested labours of many unprejudiced writers. It is hoped that this little volume, the contents of which are drawn entirely from the Holy Qur'an, will prove a further step in removing many of the misconceptions prevailing against Islam.

The bringing out of this volume is entirely due to the propagandic efforts of the Sadr Anjuman-i-Ahmadiyya, Qadian, which is already doing useful work in the dissemination of true

knowledge as to the teachings of Islam through the valuable monthly, the ***Review of Religions***, and which has in contemplation the publication of not only more tracts of a similar nature but also of more permanent and much more needed works on Islam, two of which, viz, an English translation of the Holy Qur'an with ample notes and a Life of the Holy Prophet based on original sources, have already been taken in hand

I cannot close this short note without an acknowledgment of the valuable assistance rendered to me in the revision of the English translation by Mr. Mohd. Alex. Russel Webb (New Jersey, U. S. A.), Maulvi Sher Ali, B.A. (Qadian) and Mr. Ghulam Muhammad, B.A. (Sialkot) to whom my best thanks are due.

Qadian (*India*), MUHAMMAD ALI.
May 1910.

PREFACE

TO THE

SECOND EDITION

It is now eleven years when the first edition of this book saw the light of the day and the Muslim as well as the non-Muslim public has highly appreciated this valuable work. The great popularity it enjoys is shown by the fact that in the original Urdu form it has run into several editions, and there is an ever-increasing demand for it. In fact this small book will ever remain a most valuable addition to the Islamic religious literature. The publication of this second edition in the English language is due to the activities of the Ahmadiyya Anjuman-i-Ishaat-i-Islam, Lahore, which is doing yeoman's service in the propagation of Islamic literature.

LAHORE:
May 1921.

MUHAMMAD ALI,
President, Ahmadiyya Anjuman-i-Ishaat-i-Islam.

PREFACE
TO THE
THIRD EDITION

It would appear to be long since the second edition of this book was published by the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam Lahore in 1921. But these sixteen years have really exhausted besides the five thousand copies of the second edition, several thousand copies brought out by certain members of the Qadian Section of the Ahmadiyya movement from time to time, only substituting a different preface, but without any alteration in the translation itself. The book thus claims a foremost place among the scanty literature on Islam from the pen of Muslims. In the present edition, which is being published by the Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat Islam, Lahore, the translation of the Quranic verses has been revised, but otherwise the book remains as it was in the first edition.

LAHORE:
February 1937.

MUHAMMAD ALI,
President Ahmadiyya Anjuman Ishaat-i-Islam, Lahore.

CONTENTS

In the name of Allāh, the Gracious and the Merciful. We praise God and pray for his blessings upon his noble Prophet

IN this auspicious meeting, which has been convened with the object that the advocates of the different religious systems should, so far as the limits of the questions set allow, set forth the beauties of their respective religions, I, as an advocate of the faith of Islam, will dwell upon its beauties. Before I start with the proper object, I take leave to state that all my assertions and arguments shall be based upon and drawn from the Holy Qur'ān. I deem it a matter of the first importance that every body, who believes in any sacred scriptures as the revealed Word of God, should so set limits to his advocacy of the religion he supports as not to go out of the holy book or depend upon arguments other than those which the book furnishes. For, if he does not observe this rule, he, as a matter of fact, makes and advances a new book and not the one which he professes to support. Therefore, as it is my object to

show the beauties of the Qur'ān and to establish its exclusive excellence over all other books, I shall bind myself by the rule above stated and depend solely upon the Qur'ān for every assertion and argument, stating only that which is contained in it in plain words, or what may be reasonably inferred from its words. As the other gentlemen are also expected to set limits to their discourses by this reasonable rule, there will be a good opportunity for judicious minds to form a judgment as to the comparative value of the different books claiming to be revealed. For the same reason, I shall avoid all reference to the authorities containing the reported words of the Holy Prophet and not go outside the Word of God as revealed in the Qur'ān. In short, this is the day of the manifestation of the glory and the excellence of the Qur'ān, and I humbly beseech Almighty God to assist me in this undertaking. Amen!

Some preliminary remarks have been made at the outset which may at first appear to some as not bearing upon the questions, but as they are necessary for the full comprehension of the subject, as dealt with in the following pages, I have, therefore, been obliged to resort to them.

THE THREE STAGES

The first question relates to the physical, moral and spiritual conditions of man. The Holy Qur'ān observes this division by fixing three respective sources for this threefold condition of man. In other words, it mentions three springs out of which these three conditions flow. The first of these in which the physical conditions of man take their birth is termed the *nafs-i-ammāra*, which signifies the uncontrollable spirit or the spirit prone to evil. Thus it says: إن النفس لأمارة بالسوء *i.e.*, most surely (man's) self is wont to command (him to do) evil (xii. 53). It is the characteristic of the *nafs-i-ammāra* that it inclines man to evil, tends to lead him into iniquitous and immoral paths and stands in the way of his attainment of perfection and moral excellence. In short, man's nature is prone to evil and transgression at a certain stage in his development, and so long as he is devoid of high moral qualities, the evil nature is predominant in him. He is subject to this state so long as he does not walk in the light of true

wisdom and knowledge but acts in obedience to the natural inclinations of eating, drinking, sleeping, becoming enraged or excited, etc., like the lower animals.

As soon, however, as he frees himself from the control of animal passions and, guided by wisdom and knowledge, holds the reins of his natural desires and governs them instead of being governed by them; in short, when a transformation is worked in his soul from grossness to virtue, he then passes the physical stage and is a moral being in the strict sense of the word. The source of the moral conditions of man is called the *nafs-i-lawwāma*, or the self-accusing spirit (conscience), in the terminology of the Holy Qur'ān. In the chapter entitled the Resurrection we have ولا اقسم بالنفس اللوامة *i.e.* 'and nay! I call to witness the self-accusing spirit (on every dereliction of duty or on the slightest act of disobedience, being conscious of having offended)' (lxxv. 2). This is the spring from which flows a highly moral life and, on reaching this stage, man is freed from bestiality. The swearing by the self-accusing soul indicates the regard in which it is held. For, the change from the disobedient to the self-accusing soul, being a sure sign of its improvement

and purification, makes it deserving of approbation in the sight of God. *Lawwāma* literally means one who reproves severely, and the *nafs-i-lawwāma* or the self-accusing soul, has been so called because it upbraids a man for the doing of an evil deed and strongly hates unbridled passions and bestial appetites. Its tendency, on the other hand, is to generate noble qualities and a virtuous disposition, to transform life so as to bring the whole course and conduct of it to moderation, and to restrain the carnal passions and sensual desires so as to keep them within due bounds. Although, as we have said above, the self-accusing soul upbraids itself for its faults and frailties, yet it is not the master of its passions, nor is it powerful enough to practise virtue exclusively. The weakness of the flesh has the upper hand sometimes and then it stumbles and falls down. Its weakness then resembles that of a child who does not like to fall but whose infirm legs are sometimes unable to support him. But it does not persist in its fault, every failure bringing only fresh reproach to the mind. In short, at this stage the soul is anxious to attain moral excellence and revolts against disobedience which is the characteristic of the

first, or the animal, stage, but does, notwithstanding its yearning for virtue, sometimes deviate from the line of duty.

The third or the last stage in the onward movement of the soul is reached on attaining to the source of all spiritual qualities. The soul at this stage is, in the words of the Holy Qur'an, the *Nafs-i-mutmainnah*, or the soul at rest. This it says : يا ايتها النفس المطمئنة ارجعي الى ربك راضية مرضية فادخلي في عبادي وادخلي جنتي 'O soul that art at rest (and restest fully contented with thy Lord), return to thy Lord, well pleased (with Him) well pleasing (Him); so enter among My servants and enter into My garden' (Lxxxix. 27-30). At this stage the soul is freed from all weaknesses and frailties and is braced with spiritual strength. It is perfectly united with God and cannot live without Him. As water flows with great force down a slope and, on account of its great mass and the total absence of all obstacles, dashes down with an irresistible force, so does the soul at this stage, casting off all trammels, flow unrestrained towards it Maker. It is to this that the words of the verse quoted above refer. It is further clear from the words, ' O soul that hast found rest in

thy Lord, return to Him' that it is in this life and not after death that this great transformation is worked and that it is in this world and not elsewhere that an access to paradise is granted to it. Again, as the soul has been commanded to return to its Lord (رب literally, Supporter), it is clear that such a soul finds its support only in its Lord. The love of God is its food and it drinks deep at this fountain of life and is therefore delivered from death. The same idea is expressed elsewhere in the Holy Qur'ān in the following words : قد افلح من زكها وقد خاب من دسها *i.e.* He will indeed be successful who purifies it and he will indeed fail who corrupts it (xci. 9, 10).

In short, these three states of the soul may be called the physical, the moral and the spiritual states of man. Of these, the physical state, *viz.*, that in which man seeks to satisfy the passions of the flesh, is most dangerous when the passions run not; for it is then that they deal a death-blow to the moral and spiritual states of man, and hence this state has been termed the disobedient spirit in the Holy Word of God.

THE THREE CONDITIONS CONSIDERED IN THEIR RELATIONS TOWARDS ONE ANOTHER

The next question for us to consider is, what is the effect of the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān upon the physical state of man, how does it guide us with respect to it, and what practical limits does it set to the natural inclinations? It may be remarked at the outset that, according to the Muslim Scriptures, the physical conditions of man are closely connected with his moral and spiritual states, so much so that even his modes of eating and drinking play a part in the moulding of his moral and spiritual qualities. If, therefore, his natural desires are subjected to the directions of the law, they take the form of moral qualities and deeply affect the spiritual state of the soul. It is for this reason that in all forms of devotion and prayer and in all the injunctions relating to internal purity and moral rectitude the greatest stress has been laid upon external purity and cleanliness and on the proper attitudes of the body. The relation between the physical and spiritual natures of man would become evident on a careful consideration of the actions of the outward organs

and the effect they produce upon the internal nature of man. Weeping, whether artificial, at once saddens the heart while an artificial laugh makes it cheerful. Likewise a prostration of the body, as is done in prayer, causes the soul to humble itself and adore the Creator; whereas strutting produces vanity and vainglory. These examples sufficiently illustrate the effect of bodily postures upon the spiritual state of man. Experience also shows the strong effect of food upon the heart and brain powers. For instance, the vegetarians ultimately lose all courage, and the result of giving up animal food is weakness of heart and total loss of the noble quality of courage. The same law is witnessed even among the animals, for the herbivorous animals do not possess even a hundredth part of the courage of the carnivora, and the same may be said of birds. There is not the least doubt then that food plays an important part in the formation of character. And further, as there is a defect in excluding flesh from diet altogether, excess in meat is also injurious to character and deals a death-blow to the admirable qualities of humility and meekness. But those who adopt the middle path are heirs to both the noble qualities, *viz.*, courage and meekness. It is with

this great law in view that the Holy Qur'ān says: كلوا و اشربوا و لا تسرفوا *i.e.*, 'Eat and drink and be not extravagant (in any particular form of diet so that your character and health may not suffer from it)' (vii. 31). I have spoken of the effect of the physical upon the moral nature of man, but it should also be borne in mind that internal movements produce external actions. Grief brings tears into the eyes and joy makes a man laugh. Thus there is a natural relation between the body and the soul and all the actions of the body, such as eating, drinking, sleeping, walking, moving, resting, etc, necessarily produce a corresponding effect upon that which pertains to the states of the soul as distinguished from external actions. A shock communicated to one point in the brain causes loss of memory, and to another it brings insensibility as a consequence. Air containing the poisonous germs of plague soon corrupts first the body and then the mind, and in a few hours the whole internal system in which reside the moral impulses is impaired and the unfortunate victim passes away like a madman. All this goes a long way to prove that there is a mysterious relation between the body and the soul of man and the solution

of the mystery is beyond human comprehension.

Another argument bearing upon the subject in hand is, that the body itself is the mother of the soul. The soul does not come from any place in the heavens and seek connection with the body in the womb of the mother but it is a light that lies concealed in the seed and grows with the growth of the body. The holy Word of God gives us to understand that the soul grows from the body while it is developed in the womb of the mother. Thus it says: *i.e.* ثم انشانا ہ خلقا اخر فتبارک اللہ احسن الخالقین 'Then We caused it to grow into another creation, so blessed be Allah, the best of the creators.' (xxiii. 14). There is a deep secret in the words, 'We manifest another creation out of the same body,' and it throws light on the nature of the soul and indicates the strong and inexplicable tie between it and the body. The hint which the word of God has here given us as to the nature of the connection between the body and the soul leads us to other important conclusions. It teaches us that the words which a man speaks and the deeds which he does, if said or done for the sake of God and to manifest His glory, and if regulated by His commands, are subject to the same Divine law, *viz.* that in

all the sincere outward actions there is a soul hidden as in the seed of man, and as the body of these actions is gradually developed, the hidden soul appears in it. When the complete embodiment of the actions takes place, the soul flashes of a sudden in perfect brightness and glory, and shows itself so far as the spirit can be seen and there appears a plain movement of life. The full development of the body of actions is followed by a blazing of the light within just like a flash of lightning. This stage is allegorically described in the Holy Qur'ān in the words: فاذا سويته ونفخت فيه من روحى فقعوا له ساجدين 'So when I have made him complete and breathed into him my inspiration, fall down making obeisance to him' (xv. 29). This verse also suggests the same idea, *viz.*, that on the complete embodiment of good actions, the spirit within brightens up. This Almighty God describes as His own soul, thus indicating that it partakes of a Divine nature. For the body is fully developed only after the extinction of the physical desires, and, therefore, the Divine light, which before was dim shines out in full lustre, and thus makes it incumbent upon every body to bow down before the manifestation of this glory. Therefore every one is naturally attracted

towards it, and falls down upon his face before it, except the spirit of evil which loves darkness.

To return to the subject in hand, the soul is a light which springs up from the body which is being prepared in the womb. By the springing up of the soul I only mean that at first it is hidden and imperceptible, although its germs are present in the seed itself, and that as the body is gradually developed, the soul grows along with it and becomes manifest. There is not the least doubt that the inexplicable connection of the soul with the seed is in accordance with the design of God and with His permission and will. It is a bright essence in the seed itself. It is not a part of it in the sense in which matter is part of matter, but at the same time it is untrue to say that it comes from outside, or, as some wrongly imagine, falling upon the earth is mixed with the substance of the seed. It is hidden in the seed as fire is latent in the flint. The holy word of God lends no support to the view that the soul comes from the heavens as something distinct from the body, or that it falls suddenly upon the earth and, mixing with the seed accidentally, finds an entrance into the womb. Nay, the idea is utterly false and totally opposed

to the laws of nature. The thousands of insects which we observe daily in stinking and rotten articles of food or in unwashed wounds do not come from outside or descend from heaven. Their existence proves to our satisfaction that the soul comes out of the body and is as surely a creation of God as anything else. From this we conclude that Almighty God Who, with His perfect wisdom and omnipotence, has created the soul out of the body, has willed and intended that a second birth of the soul should also be made manifest through the body. The movements of our soul demand upon those of our body and if the body is drawn in any direction the soul must follow. The physical side of man's life being of such great importance even to the soul, the true Word of God cannot be silent on the point. The Holy Qur'ān has, therefore, applied itself abundantly to the reformation of the physical state of man's life. It gives us the most valuable and minute directions on all matters of importance with which man is concerned. All his movements, the manner of the satisfaction of all his requirements, his family, social and general connections, health and sickness, are all regulated by rules and it is shown how external order and purity have their

effect upon the spiritual state of man. Considering the limited time I have at my disposal to-day I will briefly note only a few of the guiding rules, for to describe them in detail would require any amount of time.

A close study of the Word of God on this important point, *viz.* the injuctions and directions relating to the reformation of the external life of man and his gradual advancement from savageness to civilization until he reaches the highest pinnacles of a spiritual life reveals the following all-wise method. In the first place Almighty God has been pleased to lead him out of darkness and raise him up from a savage state by teaching him the rules relating to his ordinary daily actions and modes of social life. Thus it begins at the lowest point of man's development and, first of all, drawing a line of distinction between man and the lower animals, teaches him the first rules of morality which may pass under the name of sociality. Next, it undertakes to improve upon the low degree of morality already acquired, by bringing the habits of man to moderation, thus turning them into sublime morals. But both these methods really relate to only one stage of advancement, the difference being only one of degree, and the

wise Author of the Universe has so arranged the system of morals that one may be able to advance from a low state to a higher one.

We pass on now to the third stage of advancement when man altogether forgets himself in the love of God and in doing His will and when his whole life is only for the sake of his Master. It is to this stage that the name Islām alludes, for it signifies total resignation to the commands and service of God and total forgetfulness of self. Thus says the Holy Qur'an: بلى من اسلم وجهه لله وهو محسن فله اجره عند ربه ولا خوف عليهم ولا هم يحزنون
Yea! whoever submits himself entirely to Allah and he is the doer of good (to others), he has his reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for him nor shall he grieve (ii. 112). And again: قل ان صلوتي ونسكي ومحياي ومماتي لله رب العالمين لاشريك له وبذلك امرت وانا اول المسلمين
'Say: surely my prayer and my sacrifice, my life and my death, are (all) for Allah, the Lord of the worlds. No associate has He; and this am I commanded and I am the first of those who submit (vi. 163, 164). وان هذا صراطي مستقيما فاتبعوا ولا تتبعوا السبل فتفرق بكم عن سبيله
'And (know) this is my path, the right one;

therefore follow it and follow not (other) ways, for they will lead you away from His way, (vi. 154). قل ان كنتم تحبون الله فاتبعونى يحببكم الله يغفر لكم ذنوبكم و الله غفور رحيم 'Say: if you love Allah then follow me; Allah will love you and forgive you your faults, and Allah is forgiving and merciful' (iii. 30).

Now I shall take and deal with the three states of life one after another. But before I proceed I must needs repeat the caution that the physical state of man's life, the source of which is the disobedient spirit, cannot be chalked out, according to the Word of God, as something quite distinct from the moral state. All the natural inclinations of man and all the desires and passions of the flesh, the Holy Qur'ān has placed under the heading of the physical conditions, which, when balanced, regulated properly, put in action and utilized, are converted into excellent moral qualities. Similarly no hard and fast lines can be drawn between the spheres of the moral and the spiritual states; but from the one man passes into the other after a total extinction of self in God, complete sanctification of the soul, entire severance from all low connections and union in God, unswerving

fidelity to the Almighty, extraordinary love of the Creator, unsurpassed tranquillity of mind and full submission to the Will of God. Man does not deserve the title of man so long as the physical conditions do not assume the shape of moral qualities, for the natural desires are common to man and the lower animals and there is nothing to mark the distinction between him and them.

Similarly the mere possession of a few moral qualities does in no way bring about spiritual life, for meekness of heart, peace of mind, and avoidance of mischief are only so many natural qualities and may be possessed even by an unworthy person who is quite ignorant of the true fountain of salvation. Not a few animals are quite harmless and more sinned against than sinning. When tamed, they are not offensive in the least and being lashed do not resist. Yet, notwithstanding all this, no one can have the foolishness to call them men, much less good men. Similarly persons who stick to the worst beliefs, nay, sometimes even those who otherwise are guilty of the blackest deeds, possess such qualities. It is possible for a person to be so tender-hearted as not to suffer the killing of the worms in his own wounds, the

lice in his hair or clothes, or the worms, which breed in the intestines or in the stomach. I even admit that tenderness of heart may reach such a degree as to induce a man to give up the use of musk or honey as the procuring of the one involves the destruction and dispersion of the poor bees and that of the other the killing of the deer and its separation from its young ones. I do not even deny that there may be persons of such a compassionate nature as to refrain even from the use of pearls and silk, as both are obtained by the destruction of the life of worms. Further I have no reason to doubt the existence of soft-hearted men who may refuse to apply leeches and be ready to suffer any pain rather than take the life of the tiny little worm. Last of all, I am even ready to admit that the feeling of tenderness may grow so strong in a man that he may even give up the drinking of water, for it also involves a waste of life, and thus put an end to his own life rather than destroy the animalcules contained in water. All this I admit, but is there any sane person who believes all this folly to be productive of any moral excellence or necessary to the state of a moral being? Is it thus that the soul of man can be purified of all internal corruptions which are

obstacles in the way of the true knowledge of God? Such harmlessness and inoffensiveness which are met with to a greater extent in some animals and birds than in man can never be the means of attaining to the desired perfection. Nay, it is fighting with nature and opposing its laws. It is rejecting the faculties and blessings with which nature has endowed us. We cannot attain to spiritual perfection unless we bring into play the different faculties in their proper place when opportunity calls for them, and walk with perseverance in the path which Almighty God has pointed out to us submitting ourselves wholly to His will. He who sacrifices himself in His way cannot live without Him. He is like a fish that has been sacrificed by the hand of God and his love is the sea in which it lives.

To return to the subject in hand, as I have already stated, there are three sources which give rise to the threefold nature of man, *viz.* the disobedient soul, the self-accusing soul, and the soul at rest. Accordingly there are three stages of reformation answering respectively to the three sources. In the first stage we are concerned with mere ignorant savages whom it is our duty to raise to the status of civilized men by teaching them the social laws relating to their daily

mutual relations. The first step toward civilization therefore consists in teaching the savage not to walk about naked, or devour carcasses, or indulge in other barbarous habits. This is the lowest grade in the reformation of man. In humanizing people upon whom no ray of the light of civilization has yet fallen, it is necessary, first of all, to take them through this stage and make them accustomed to morals of the lowest type. When the savage has learned the crude manners of society, he is prepared for the second stage of reformation. He is then taught the high and excellent moral qualities pertaining to humanity as well as the proper use of his own faculties and of whatever lies hidden beneath them. Those who have acquired excellent morals are now prepared for the third stage and, after they have attained to outward perfection, are made to taste of union with, and the love of, God. These are the three stages which the Holy Qur'ān has described as necessary for any wayfarer who travels in the path of God.

Our Holy Prophet was raised at a time when the whole world had sunk to the lowest depths of ignorance. To this the Holy Qur'ān alludes in the following words: ظهر الفساد في البر والبحر *i.e.*, 'Corruption has appeared in the

land and the sea' (xxx. 41). The metaphorical phrase translated into plain language would mean that the *Ahl-i-kitāb*, the people who had been given the Scriptures from God, had become corrupt as well as those who had never drunk of the fountain of inspiration. The Qur'ān was, therefore, sent to bring life to the dead as it says: اعلموا ان الله يحى الارض بعد موتها 'Know (it for certain) that Allah gives life to the earth after its death' (Lvii : 17). Utter darkness and barbarism at this time prevailed over the whole of Arabia. No social laws were observed, and the most despicable deeds were openly committed. An unlimited number of wives was taken, and all prohibited thing were made lawful. Rapine and incest raged supreme and not infrequently mothers were taken for wives. It was to prohibit this horrible custom that the words حرمت عليكم امهاتكم were revealed in the Qur'ān, *i.e.* 'Forbidden to you are your mothers' (iv. 23). Like beasts they did not even hesitate to devour carcasses and cannibalism also was not unknown. There was no vice which was not freely practised by them. The great majority of them did not believe in a future life and not a few were Atheists.

Infanticide prevailed throughout the whole country, and they mercilessly butchered orphans to rob them of their properties. To the outward eye they had the forms of men but in reality they were totally devoid of rationality, modesty, jealousy and other manly qualities. Their thirst for wine was excessive and fornication was committed unscrupulously. Ignorance prevailed so widely that the neighbouring people called them *Ummis* or the ignorant. Such is the dark picture of the time and the country in which the Holy Prophet of Arabia appeared and it was to reclaim this wild and ignorant people that the Word of God came upon him. The threefold reformation of man to which I have called attention was, therefore, destined to be brought about at this period by means of the Holy Qur'ān. It is for this reason that the Holy Book claims to be a perfect guidance to mankind as to it alone was given the opportunity to work a reformation complete on all sides, and the other books were never given such an opportunity. The Qur'ān had a grand aim before it. It had first to reclaim mankind from savagery and to make them men; then to teach them excellent morals and make them good men, and, last of all, to take them to the highest

pinnacles of advancement and make them godly. The Holy Qur'ān gives excellent instructions on these three points.

Attention must also be called to another very important point before I discuss the proper subject of the question, *viz.* the threefold reformation of man. It should be clearly borne in mind that the Qur'ān does not inculcate doctrines which are against the reason of man and which therefore one has to follow against his better judgment. The whole drift of the Holy Book and the pith of its teachings is the threefold reformation of man and all other directions are simply means to the end. As we see that in the treatment of bodily diseases the physician recognizes the necessity of dissecting or performing surgical operations on proper occasions or applying ointments to wounds, etc., so have the teachings of the Holy Qur'ān also employed these means on fit occasions to serve the purpose when necessary and advisable. All its moral teachings, precepts and doctrines have an all-pervading purpose beneath them which consists in transforming men from the physical state which is imbued with a tinge of savageness into the moral state and from the moral into the boundless deep of the spiritual state.

It has already been observed that the physical conditions of man do not differ in quality from his moral state. The fact is that the physical conditions, when subjected to moderation and used on the proper occasion according to the directions of reason and good judgment, are transformed into the moral conditions. Before a man is guided in his actions by the dictates of reason and conscience, his movements do not fall under the heading of moral conditions at all, however much they may resemble them; they are but natural and instinctive impulses. For instance, the affection and docility which a dog or a goat or any other domestic animal shows toward its master cannot be designated as courtesy and refined manners, nor can the fierceness of a wolf or a lion be classed as rudeness or misbehaviour. What we call good or ill manners or morals are the effect of an exercise of reason and must be shown at the proper time. The man who is not guided by the dictates of reason in his actions may be compared either to the child whose reasoning powers are not yet matured or to the mad man who has lost all reason. The only line of distinction that can be drawn between the movements of a mad man or a child, on

the one hand, and the actions of a man of reason, on the other, is that the former are only natural impulses while the latter are the result of an exercise of the reasoning faculty. For instance, the young human being will, as soon as it is born, seek the breast of its mother, while a chicken will, after it is hatched, begin to pick up food with its beak. Similarly the young of a leech inherits instinctively the habits of that worm and that of a serpent or lion the habits of its own parents.

The young human being begins soon after birth to show human peculiarities. As it advances in years these habits become more conspicuous It cries louder and its smile assumes the form of laughter. It expresses its pleasure or displeasure in its movements but still these movements are more the result of impulse than of an exercise of the intellect. Such is also man in his savage state when his intellectual faculties are yet in an embryonic state. He is subject to the impulses of his nature and whatever he does he does in obedience to them. His deeds are not the result of due deliberation. The impulses of his nature subject to external conditions assume an outward shape. It should not, however, be assumed

that all these movements are necessarily improper; some of them may resemble the judicious actions of a reasonable person, but it cannot be denied that they are not preceded by any exercise of the reasoning faculties or by any deep consideration of their propriety or impropriety. Even if we assume the presence of a very slight degree of reasoning in some actions of the savage, we cannot class his actions generally under the head of good or bad actions, for the more poweful factor in bringing them about is not the reasoning faculty but an instinctive impulse or a yielding to desire and passions.

In short, we cannot class as moral the actions of the being whose life is akin to that of savages and who is subject to his natural impulses like the lower animals, infants or mad men. The first stage of a moral being, *i.e.*, of one whose actions can be classed as good or bad morally, is that in which he is capable of distinguishing between good and bad actions or between two good or two bad actions of different degrees. This takes place when the reasoning faculty is sufficiently well developed to form general ideas and perceive the remoter consequences of actions. It is

then that man regrets the omission of a good deed or feels repentance or remorse after doing a bad one. This is the second stage of man's life which the Holy Qur'ān terms *nafs-i-lawwāma*, *i.e.*, the self-accusing spirit (or to take a more familiar term, conscience). But it should be borne in mind that for the savage to attain to this stage of the self-accusing spirit, mere admonition is not sufficient. He must have so much knowledge of God that he may not look upon his own creation by God as an insignificant or meaningless act. This soul-ennobling sense of God can alone lead to actions truly moral and it is for this reason that the Holy Qur'ān inculcates a true knowledge of God along with its admonitions and warnings and assures man that every good or bad action bears fruit which may cause spiritual bliss or torture in this life while a clearer and more palpable reward or punishment awaits him in the next. In short when man reaches this stage of advancement, which we have called the self-accusing spirit, his reason, knowledge and conscience reach the stage of developement in which a feeling of remorse overtakes him in the doing of unrighteous deeds and he is very anxious to perform good ones.

This is the stage in which the actions of man can be said to be moral.

It is necessary here to define the word خُلق *Khulq* (morals). There are two words alike in form except in the vowel point. One of them is خَلق *Khalq* which means external creation, and the other خُلق ***khulq*** which means internal creation or inborn quality. As the perfection of internal creation takes place in moral excellence and not in the innate passions of man, the former is the proper signification of the word ***khulq*** and not the latter. We may take this opportunity of exposing the error of the popular view that forbearance, humility and meekness are the only qualities which constitute good morals. The fact is that, corresponding to every external limb or form of action, there is an inborn quality in man, and these various qualities, when displayed in the proper place, are termed morals. For instance, in weeping the outward action is that of the eye from which tears flow but against this there is in the heart a power of melting which we may term tenderness which, when properly applied by a moral being, is one of the excellent morals. Again a man applies his hands in

defending himself against, or opposing, an enemy, but corresponding to this power of the external organ, there is in the heart a quality which we call courage and this, when properly used, is also one of the high morals, the possession of which is necessary for man to attain to perfection. Similarly a man sometimes saves an oppressed man from the oppressor with his hands or feels impelled to give something to the helpless and the hungry or serve mankind in some other way but all such actions proceed from the inborn quality which we call commiseration. Or sometimes a man inflicts punishment upon a wrong-doer and the source of this outward action is the moral quality called vengeance. Or again, there are occasions upon which a man who receives an injury refrains from injuring in return does not resist evil and this refraining grows out of the moral quality which we term forbearance. In like manner, a man does sometimes employ his hands or feet or heart or brain or his wealth in doing good to his fellow-beings and then the corresponding moral quality of charity is at work. The truth is, as we have already said, that all these qualities are only ranked as moral qualities when they are used on the

proper occasion. Thus in the Holy Qur'ān, Almighty God says addressing the Holy Prophet: انك لعلى خلق عظيم 'Verily thou art of excellent morals,' *i.e.*, all the high moral qualities such as charity, courge, justice, mercy, kindness, truth, highmindedness, etc., are combined in thy person. In short, all the qualities with which man's mind is naturally endowed, such as politenss, modesty, honesty, generosity, jealousy, perseverance, chastity, devoutness, moderation, compassion, sympathy, courage, charity, forgiveness, patience, kindness, truth, fidelity, etc., when their outward manifestation is made on the proper occasion, fall under the definition of virtue. All these grow out of the natural inclinations and passions of man when the latter are restrained by the use of due deliberation. Progress is an essential characteristic of man and is not shared by the lower animals and hence it is that true religion, good company and virtuous injunctions transform his natural passions into morals.

THE PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

After these preliminary remarks we shall consider the teachings of the Qur'ān in the first stage of the threefold reformation which we have referred to above. This is the earliest stage in man's civilization and it teaches that particular portion of morals which we term ادب (manners). Laws are laid down to guide the actions of daily life, and all that is necessary to make the savage a social being is inculcated. The injunctions of the Holy Qnr'ān on this point are as follows: حرمت علیکم امهاتکم و بناتکم و اخواتکم وعماتکم وخالاتکم وبنات الاخ و بنات الاخت و امهاتکم الاتی ارضعنکم و اخواتکم من الرضاعة و امهات نسائکم و ربائبکم الاتی في حجورکم من نسائکم اللاتی دخلتم بهن فان لم تکونوا دخلتم بهن فلا جناح علیکم و حلائل ابناءکم الذین من اصلابکم و ان تجمعوا بین الاختین الا ما قد سلف 'Forbidden to you are your mothers and your daughters and your sisters and your paternal aunts and your maternal aunts and brothers' daughters and

sisters' daughters and your mothers that have suckled you and your foster-sisters and mothers of your wives and your step-daughters who are in your guardianship, (born) of your wives to whom you have gone in; but if you have not gone into them, there is no blame on you (in marrying them), and the wives of your sons who are of your own loins, and that you should have two sisters together, except what has already passed." (iv : 23). لا يحل لكم ان ترثوا النساء كرها

"It is not lawful for you that you should take women as heritage (or be heirs to women) against (their) will" (iv. 19). ولا تنكحوا ما نكح آباؤكم من النساء الا ما قد سلف, "And marry not women whom your fathers married, except what has already passed (shall be excused for you did it in ignorance)." (iv. 22). اليوم احل لكم الطيبات وطعام الذين اوتو الكتاب حل لكم وطعامكم حل لهم والمحصنات من المومنات والمحصنات من الذين اوتوا الكتاب من قبلكم اذا آتيتموهن اجورهن محصنين غير مسافحين ولا متخذی اخدان "This day (all) the good things are allowed to you, and the food of those who have been given the Book is lawful for you and your food is lawful for them; and the

chaste from among the believing women and the chaste from among those who have been given the Book before you (are lawful for you), when you have given them their dowries, taking (them) in marriage, not fornicating nor taking them for Paramours in secret," (v. 5). There was a custom among some ignorant Arabs that if children were not born to a man, his wife secretly went to another man for getting children. It is for the extirpation of this savage custom which is here called *musāfihat* that the words have been used. لا تقتلوا انفسكم "Do not commit suicide" (vi. 29). لا تقتلوا اولادكم "Do not slay your children" (vi. 152). لا تدخلوا بيوتا غير بيوتكم حتى تستانسوا وتسلموا على اهلها ذالكم خير لكم لعلكم تذكرون فان لم تجدوا فيها احدا فلا تدخلوها حتى يؤذن لكم وان قيل لكم ارجعوا فارجعوا هو ازكى لكم "Do not enter houses other than your own houses (like savages but wait) until you have asked permission and saluted their inmates (saying, 'Peace be with you'); this is better for you, that you may be mindful. But if you do not find anyone therein, then do not enter them until permission is given to you; and if it is said to you, go back, then go back. This is purer for you" (xxiv : 27, 28). واتوا البيوت من ابوابها

"And go into the houses by their doors (not by jumping over their walls)" (ii. 189). وإذا حييتم بتحية فحيوا بأحسن منها أو ردوها
"And when you are greeted with a greeting, greet with a better (greeting) than it or return it" (iv. 86). إنما الخمر والميسر والأنصاب والأزلام رجس من عمل الشيطان فاجتنبوه لعلكم تفلحون
"Intoxications and games of chance and (sacrificing to) stones set up and (dividing by) arrows are only an uncleanness, the devil's work; shun it therefore that you may be successful" (v. 90). حرمت عليكم الميتة والدم ولحم الخنزير وما أهل لغير الله به والمنخنقة والموقوذة والمتردية والنطيحة وما أكل السبع إلا ما ذكيتم وما ذبح على النصب
"Forbidden to you is that which dies of itself, and blood and flesh of swine, and that on which any other name than that of Allah has been invoked, the strangled (animal) and that beaten to death, and that killed by a fall and that killed by being smitten with the horn, and that which wild beasts have eaten, except what you slaughter, and what is sacrificed on stones set up (for idols)." (v. 3). يسئلونك ماذا أحل لهم قل أحل لكم الطيبات

"They ask you as to what is allowed to them (to eat). Say: the good things are allowed to you (only the dead and the unclean things which resemble the dead are forbidden)." (v. 4). و اذا قيل لكم تفسحوا في المجالس فافسحوا يفسح الله لكم و اذا قيل انشزوا فا نشزوا "When it is said to you, make room in (your) assemblies (for others), then make ample room (that others may sit down), Allah will give you ample; and when it is said, Rise up, then rise up." (lviii. 11). كلوا و اشربوا و لا تسرفوا "Eat and drink everything that is good (whether flesh or herbs), but be moderate in your diet and do not exceed the proper limits." (vii. 31). قولوا قولا سديدا "Do not induldge in idle talk, but speak rightly when occasion requires it." (xxxiii. 70). وثيابك فطهر و الرجز فاهجر "And let your clothes be clean and let everything that belongs to you (your body, your houses and streets and every place where you sit), be purified from dirt and uncleanliness." (lxxiv. 4, 5). واقصد في مشيك واغضض من صوتك "Let your pace be middling, *i.e.* (neither too swift nor too slow), and let your voice be neither too loud nor too low (unless the occasion

requires otherwise)." (xxxi 19). و تزودوا فان خير الزاد التقوي - "And (when you set out on a journey) make provision, for surely the benefit of provision is the guarding of oneself (against begging)." (ii : 197) و ان كنتم جنبا فا طهروا "And if you are unclean, purify yourselves by bathing all over." (v. 6). و في اموالهم حق للسائل و المحروم "And of your substances there should be a due and stated portion for those who ask and for the dumb animals." (li. 19). و ان خفتم الا تقسطوا في اليتامى فانكحوا ما طاب لكم من النساء مثني و ثلث و ربع و ان خفتم الا تعدلوا فواحدة "There is no harm in your marrying the orphan girls who are your wards, but if you are apprehensive that as they have no guardian besides yourselves, you may therefore be sometimes tempted to deal with them unjustly, then marry of other women who have guardians, two, three or four, provided you can act equitably towards them in all respects, but if you cannot then marry only one (though you may need more)." (iv. 3). The Holy Qur'an has granted a permission first and put a restraint then. The former was necessary because an undue restraint would have resulted in a general spread of fornication, and the latter checked

excess in the number of wives which was unlimited in the days of ignorance. وا تو ا النساء صد قا تهن نحلة "And give women their dowries as a free gift." (iv. 4).

In short this is the primary step which the Holy Qur'an has taken for the reformation of man and these are the rules by means of which it raised, and claims now to raise, savages to the status of social beings. These teachings simply contain rules of good conduct and social relations. So far it does not inculcate teachings containing high morals which are intended to make men morally great. It was necessary that this step should have first been taken for the people whose regeneration was the primary object of our Holy Prophet's appearance and who were actually living in a state of savagery far surpassing that of other peoples. They observed no law which could differentiate them from savages. It was therefore necessary that the Holy Qur-an should have first of all taught them the rules of society.

The following point deserves special notice. خنزیر *Khinzir*, *i.e.*, a swine, is one of those things which the Muslims have been forbidden to eat. The very name of this foul animal contains an allusion to the prohibition of its flesh.

It is a combination of خنز *khinz* and ار *ar*, the first part meaning 'very foul' and the second 'I see.' The word literally means 'I see it very foul.' The name which God gave this animal in the beginning, therefore, points to its foulness. But what is still more worderful is that in Hindi this animal is known by the name of سؤر *sūar* which is composed of two words سوء *sū* and ار *ar*, the latter part being identical with the latter part of the Arabic word and the former being the exact equivalent of the first part of the Arabic form. The Hindi word, therefore, means exactly the same as the Arabic, *i.e.*, 'I see it very foul,' the form also remaining Arabic. The Arabic origin of a Hindi word is not surprising, for as we will show in the *Minan-ul-Rahman*, Arabic is the mother of all languages and its words are frequently met with in all other languages. *Sūar* is therefore an Arabic word. In Hindi this animal is also know as بد *bad*, meaning bad or foul which is probably a translation of the original Arabic word. It appears that at an early age in the world's history, when separation had taken place, the word *sūar* which is the exact equivalent of, and synonymous with, the still prevalent Arabic

form *Khinzir*, was used to signify the name of this animal, and it has kept the original form after the lapse of thousands of years. The Sanskrit form of the word may have changed a little but there can be no doubt that the root is Arabic, for it supplies the reason for which the name was given, and the word *Khinzir* attests to the truth of the same view. As to the applicability of this sense of the word to the habits of this animal, there can be no question. Everybody knows that it is extremely ugly and lives upon filth, and is moreover the most shameless of all creatures. The reason of its prohibition is thus evident. Taken as food its foul flesh will have the most injurious consequences upon body as well as soul, for we have shown above that food affects the whole external as well as internal system of man. The pre-Islamic physicians of the Greek school also held that the flesh of this animal produced shamelessness. On similar grounds the Holy Qur'an has prohibited the flesh of animals that die a natural death, for it also affects both the physical health and the morals. Animals strangled or killed by a blow are treated like those that die a natural death.

THE MORAL CONDITIONS

Having briefly indicated the directions given by the Holy Qur'an in the first stage of reformation, we now come to the second. After it has given to the savage the necessary rules of guidance, it undertakes to teach him high morals. Time and space do not allow us to treat this subject at full length here. We shall, therefore, mention, as a specimen, only a few of the moral qualities upon which the Holy Qur'an has laid stress. All moral qualities fall under two heads: (*a*) those which enable a man to abstain from inflicting injury upon his fellow-men, and (*b*) those which enable him to do good to others. To the first class belong the rules which direct the intentions and actions of man so that he may not injure the life, property or honour of his fellow-beings by means of his tongue or hand or eye or any other member of his body. The second class comprises all rules calculated to guide the intentions and actions of man in doing good to others by means of the faculties which God has granted him or in declaring the glory or honour of others or in forbearing from a

punishment which an offender justly deserves (thus giving him the positive benefit of having escaped a physical punishment or loss of property which he would otherwise have certainly suffered), or in punishing him in such a manner that the punishment turns out to be a blessing for him.

CHASTITY

The moral qualities which fall under the heading of abstaining from injuries are four in number and each one of these is designated by a single word in the Arabic language whose rich vocabulary supplies a different word for different human conceptions, manners and morals. First of all we shall consider احصان (*ihsán*) or chastity. This word signifies the virtue which relates to the act of procreation in men and women. A man or a woman is said to be محصن or محصنة (***muhsin or muhsana***) when he or she abstains from illegal intercourse and its preliminaries which bring disgrace and ruin upon the head of the sinners in this world and severe torture in the next, besides the disgrace and loss caused to the relatives. None is more wicked than the infamous villain who causes the loss of a wife to a husband and that of a mother to her children, and thus violently disturbs the peace of the whole household, bringing ruin upon the

head of both, the guilty wife and the innocent husband and children. The first thing to remember about this priceless moral quality, which we call احصان *i e.*, chastity, is that no one deserves credit for refraining from satisfying his carnal desires illegally if nature has not granted him those desires. The words 'moral quality', therefore, cannot be applied to the mere act of refraining from such a course unless nature has also granted a man the powers which produce in him the capability of committing the evil deed. It is refraining under such circumstances, *i.e.*, against the power of the passions which nature has placed in man, that deserves to be credited as a high moral quality. Nonage, impotency, emasculation or old age nullify the existence of the moral quality we term chastity, although a refraining from the illegal act exists in these cases. But the fact is, that in such cases it is a natural condition, and there is no resistance of passion, and consequently no propriety or impropriety in the act. This, as we have already said, is a distinction of importance between natural conditions and moral qualities, in the former of which there exists no tendency to go to the opposite direction, while in the latter there is a struggle between the good and evil passions

which necessitates the application of the reasoning faculty. There is no doubt then that, as above indicated, children under the age of puberty and men who have lost the power, upon which restrictions are to be imposed, cannot claim to possess a moral quality of so great a value, though their actions might resemble those of chaste men and women. But their chastity, if it might at all be called chastity, is only a natural condition over which they have no control.

The directions contained in the Holy Word of God for the attainment of this noble quality are described in the following words: قل للمومنين يغضوا من ابصارهم ويحفظوا فروجهم ذلك ازكى لهم ان الله خبير بما يصنعون وقل للمومنات يغضضن من ابصارهن ويحفظن فروجهن ولا يبدين زينتهن الا ما ظهر منها وليضربن بخمرهن على جيوبهن ...... ولا يضربن بارجلهن ليعلم ما يخفين من زينتهن وتوبوا الى الله جميعا ايه المومنون لعلكم تفلحون. "Say to the believing men that they cast down their looks (restrain their eyes from looking upon strange women whose sight

may excite their Carnal Passions, and that on such occasions they should cast down their eyes) and guard their Private Parts; that is Purer for them; Surely Allah is aware of what they do. And say to the believing women that they cast down their looks (refrain from casting their looks upon strange men) and guard their Private Parts and not display their ornaments except what appears thereof (they display not the decorated Parts of their bodies except those which are external), and let them wear their head-coverings over their bosoms (so as to cover their heads and ears and necks and breasts) . ... and let them not strike their feet (together like dancers) so that what they hide of their ornaments may be known; and turn to Allah all of you, o believers! So that you may be successful." (xxiv. 30). ولا تقربوا الزنا انه كان فاحشة وساء سبيلا. "Draw not near unto fornication, (*i.e.*, keep aloof from occasions which give rise to such ideas, and keep away from paths which might lead to a commission of this sin); for he who commits fornication does an extremely wicked deed, and it is an evil way (for it keeps back from the goal and is a dangerous obstacle in attaining the desired perfection)" (xvii; 32).

وليستعفف الذين لا يجدون نكاحا " And let those who do not find a match keep chaste (employ other means to preserve their continence as fasting or taking light food or doing hard work)," (xxiv. 33) ورهبانية ابتدعوها ماكتبناها عليهم.. . فمارعوها حق رعايتها. (Some people have devised methods of their own for restraining themselves from sexual relations as by adopting celibacy or monasticism and thus deprecating marriage or by submitting themselves to castration, but all these methods have been invented by the people themselves). And (as far) monkery they invoked it—we did not prescribe it to them. .. .. ..(and the result was) that they did not observe it with its due observance." (lvii : 27).

Here Almighty God negatives the assertion of His having prescribed the methods of castration, etc., for had these been the commandments of the Almighty all the people would have had to observe these rules and then the human race would long since have disappeared from the face of the earth. In addition to the disadvantages and immorality attaching to the evil practice, it is an objection against the Creator for having created such a power in man. Moreover, it can be easily seen that there is no merit in being

unable to do an act, and credit is due to him only who has to resist the evil tendency and overcome the evil passions from a fear of God. The person who has the energy in him deserves a twofold credit, *viz.*, for the application of the energy in the proper place and for refraining from applying it where there is not the proper occasion. But the man who has lost it is not entitled to either one of these. He is like a child and deserves no credit for refraining from what he has lost the power to do. There is no resistance, no overcoming and, consequently, no glory.

These verses not only contain excellent teachings for the attainment of chastity, but point out five remedies for observing continence. These are: restraining the eyes from looking upon strangers, and the ears from hearing strange voices exciting lust, not hearing the love-stories of strange men and women, avoiding every occasion where there may be fear of being involved in the wicked deed and, last of all, fasting, etc., in case of celibacy.

Here we can confidently assert that the excellent teachings upon chastity, together with the remedies for continence, as contained in the Holy Qur'an, are a peculiarity of Islám. One

particular point deserves special attention. The natural propensity of man, in which sexual appetite takes its root and over which man cannot have full control except by undergoing a thorough transformation, is that when everthere is an occasion for it, it takes fire and throws its object into serious danger. The Divine injunction in this respect is, therefore, not that we may look at strange women and their beauty and ornaments or their gait and dancing so long as we do it with pure looks, nor that it is lawful for us to listen to their sweet songs or to the stories of their love and beauty, provided it is done with a pure heart, but that it is never lawful for us to cast glances at them, whether to lust or otherwise, and to listen to their voices, whether with a pure or an impure heart. We are forbidden to do an act in doing which we are not treading upon sure ground. We must avoid every circumstance which might make us stumble at any time. Unrestrained looks are sure to lead to danger, and therefore we are commanded not only not to look to lust after a woman but not to look at her at all so that the eye and the heart should remain pure and perfectly free from every dross. If the eye is accustomed to look after strange women, there is fear lest it

should sometime lead to dangerous consequences. For the attainment and preservation of chastity, therefore, there could be no higher teaching and no nobler doctrine than that inculcated by the Holy Qur'an. To let loose a hungry dog over loaves and then expect that it would not do so much as think of them is a vain desire. The Word of God, therefore, restrains the carnal desires of man even from smouldering in secret and enjoins upon him to avoid the very occasions where there is danger of the excitement of the evil passions.

This is the secret underlying the principle of the seclusion of women in Islam. It is sheer ignorance of the noble principles of that religion if we take the seclusion in the sense of shutting up women like prisoners in a gaol. The object of seclusion is that both men and women should be restrained from intermingling freely and that neither sex should be at liberty to display its decoration and beauty to the other sex, and this rule is no doubt conducive to the good of both sexes. It should further be borne in mind that غض بصر is in Arabic the casting down of one's eyes when the object of sight is not one which it is proper for a person to look at freely and not the refraining of one's looks on the proper

occasion. Every one who has a yearning after righteousness of heart should not, like savages, be looking on all sides. The casting down of eyes on proper occasions is the first requirement of a social life. The habit, without causing any serious disadvantage to man in his social relations, has the invaluable advantage of making him perfect in one of the highest morals which we call chastity.

HONESTY

We come next to the second moral quality of refraining from injury which is called in Arabic امانة *i.e.*, honesty. This consists in not injuring others by cheating them or taking unlawful possession of their properties. This quality is naturally met with in man. An infant, free as it is from every bad habit, is averse to sucking the milk of a woman other than its mother if it has not been entrusted to her when quite unconscious. This habit in the infant is the root from which flows the natural inclination to be honest, and which is later developed into the moral quality known as 'honesty'. The true principle of honesty is that there should be the same aversion to the dishonest taking of another's property as the child has to sucking the milk of a woman who is not its mother. In

the child, however, this is not a moral quality but only a natural condition, inasmuch as it is not regulated by any principle or displayed on the proper occasion. The child has no choice in the matter and, unless there is a choice, the action not being the action of a moral being cannot be included in the category of moral conditions. The person who, like the child, shows this inclination in obedience to the requirements of his nature without looking to the propriety of the occasion, cannot, in the strict sense of the word, be called an honest and faithful man. The person who does not strictly observe the conditions which raise this natural inclination to the status of a moral quality cannot lay any claim to it although his action might, to outward appearance, resemble the action of a moral being which is done with all the requisites and after a due consideration of its advisability. We cite in illustration a few verses from the Holy Qur'an bearing upon the subject: و لا تؤتوا السفهاء اموالكم التى جعل الله لكم قياما و ارزقوهم فيها و اكسوهم و قولوا لهم قولا معروفا و ابتلوا اليتامى حتى اذا بلغوا النكاح فان انستم منهم رشدا فادفعوا اليهم اموالهم و لا تاكلوها اسرافا و بدارا ان يكبروا

ومن كان غنيا فليستعفف ومن كان فقيرا فليأكل
بالمعروف فاذا دفعتم اليهم اموالهم فاشهدوا
عليهم وكفى بالله حسيبا...... وليخش الذين لو
تركوا من خلفهم ذرية ضعافا خافوا عليهم
فليتقوا الله وليقولوا قولا سديدا ان الذين
يأكلون اموال اليتامى ظلما انما يأكلون
فى بطونهم نارا وسيصلون سعيرا

"And do not give away your property which Allah has made for you a (means of) support to the week of understanding (minors or orphans, who have not sufficient prudence for management of their affairs) and maintain them out of (the profits of) it, and clothe them and speak to them words of honest advice. And test the orphans untill they attain puberty; then if you find in them maturity of intellect (for which the proper limit is eighteen, and if you perceive that they are able to manage their aflairs well), make over to them their property, and do not consume it extravagantly and hastily, lest they attain to full age; and whoever is rich, let him abstain altogether, and whoever is poor, let him eat reasonably. (It was a well-known rule among the Arabs that the guardians of an orphan's property, if they had a mind to take any remuneration

for their services, took it, so long as possible, out of the profit which the trade brought in and did not touch the stock. The Holy Qur'an permits the taking of recompense in this reasonable manner). Then when you make over to them their property, call witnesses in their presence; and Allah is enough as a Reckoner . . . . . And let those fear who, should they leave behind them weakly offsprings, would fear on their account; so let them be careful of (their duty to) Allah, and let them speak right words." (iv. 5-10)

This, which God has preached, is true honesty and faithfulness, and its various requisites are clearly set forth in the verses quoted above. Honesty which misses any of these requisites cannot be classed as one of the high morals but a natural condition in its crude state and not quite safe against every breach of faith. Elsewhere the Holy Qur'an says: ولا تاكلوا اموالكم بينكم بالباطل و تدلوا بها الى الحكام لتاكلوا فريقا من اموال الناس بالاثم و انتم تعلمون
" And do not swallow up your property among yourselves by false means, neither seek to gain access thereby to the judges, so that you may swallow up a part of the property of men wrongfully while you know." (ii : 188) ان الله

يامركم ان تؤدوا الامانات الى اهلها " Surely Allah commands you to make over trusts to those worthy of them (*i.e.* to their owners)." (IV : 58) ان الله لا يحب الخائنين ' Surely Allah does not love the treacherous' (viii. 68). اوفوا الكيل ولا تكونوا من المخسرين وزنوا بالقسطاس المستقيم ولا تبخسوا الناس اشاءهم ولا تعثوا فى الارض مفسدين 'Give a full measure and be not of those who diminish. And weigh (things) with a right balance. And do not wrong men of their things, and do not act corruptly in the earth making mischief (*i.e.*, committing theft or decoity, or picking pockets, or otherwise unlawfully seizing other men's property).' (xxvi. 181-183). ولا تتبدلوا الخبيث بالطيب. 'And do not substitute worthless (things), for (their) good (ones. For as it is unlawful for one person to lay hold of another's substance wrongfully, so is it also unjust to sell things of an inferior and worthless quality or give them for those of a higher one).' (iv. 2).

These are comprehensive injunctions against all sorts of dishonest dealings, and every breach of faith comes within them. Separate offences are not enumerated here for a comprehensive

list of them should have required much space; and even then it would have been very hard to set a limit to them. The Holy Qur'an has, therefore, made a general statement which comprehends in its plain meaning all sorts of dishonesty. In short, the person who shows honesty in some of his dealings but is not scrupulous about it to the minutest degree and does not observe all nice rules is not gifted with the moral quality of honesty, but acts out of habit in obedience to the natural inclination and without applying the faculty of reason.

MEEKNESS

Coming to the third class of morals falling within the first division, we have to deal with the quality known in Arabic as هدنة (*hudna*) or هون (*hūn*). It consists in refraining from causing bodily hurt to another person and thus living a peaceful life upon earth. Peaceableness is, no doubt, a blessing for humanity and must be valued for the great good which proceeds from it. The natural inclination out of which this moral quality develops is witnessed in the young of a human being in the form of attachment. It is plain that divested of reason man cannot realize peaceableness or hostility. A natural

inclination towards submission and attachment so early witnessed in the young human being is, therefore, only the germ out of which grows the high moral quality of peaceableness. It cannot itself be classed as moral so long as it is not consciously resorted to upon a recommendation of reason. It is otherwise when reason and judgment come to the assistance. The directions contained in the Holy Qur'an may be briefly noticed. الصلح خير. 'And reconciliation is better.' (iv. 128). واصلحوا ذات بينكم. 'And set aright matters of your difference.' (viii. 1). و ان جنحوا للسلم فاجنح لها. 'And if they incline to peace, then incline to it.' (viii. 61). وعباد الرحمن الذين يمشون علي الارض هونا. 'And the servants of the Beneficent God are they who walk on the earth in humbleness.' (xxv. 63). و اذا مروا با للغو مروا كراما. 'And when they pass by what is vain (which they fear might lead to some quarrel) they pass by nobly (and do not pick up quarrels on trifling matters).' (xxv. 72); *i.e.*, they do not take up an hostile attitude so long as no material injury is caused to them. The guiding principle of peaceableness is that one should not be offended at the

slightest opposition to one's feelings. The word لغو (*laghw*) used in this verse requires to be explained. A word or deed is said to be *laghw* or frivolous when it causes no substantial loss or material injury to its object although done or said with a mishievous or bad intention. Meekness requires that no notice should be taken of such words or deeds and that a man should behave gentlemanly on such occasions. But if the injury is not trivial and causes material loss to life, property or honour, the quality required to meet this emergency is not meekness but عفو or forgiveness which shall be treated in its proper place. ادفع بالتي هی احسن فاذا الذي بينك وبينه عداوة كانه ولی حميم. "Repel (evil) with what is best, when lo! he between whom and you was enmity would be as if he were a warm friend." (xli. 34).

POLITENESS

The fourth and last class of the morals of the first division is رفق (*rifq*) or politeness. The preliminary stage of this quality as witnessed in the child, is طلاقت or cheerfulness. Before the child learns to speak, the cheerfulness of its face serves the same purpose as kind words in a

grown-up man. But the propriety of the occasion is an essential condition in classing politeness as a high moral quality. The teachings of the Qur'an on this point are as follows: و قولوا للناس حسنا. 'And you shall speak to men good words.' (ii. 83). لا يسخر قوم من قوم عسي ان يكونوا خيرا منهم ولا نساء من نساء عسى ان يكن خيرا منهن ولا تلمزوا انفسكم ولا تنابزوا بالالقاب.....اجتنبوا كثيرا من الظن ان بعض الظن اثم ولا يغتب بعضكم بعضا . و اتقوا الله ان الله تواب رحيم
'Let not (one) people laugh at (another) people (to scorn), perchance they may be better than they nor let women laugh at (other) women (to scorn) perchance they may be better than they; and do not find fault with your own people nor call one another by nicknames. . . . . . Avoid most of suspicion for surely suspicion in some cases is a sin, and do not spy nor let some of you back-bite others . . . . And be careful of (your duty to) Allah, surely Allah is Oft—returning (to mercy), Merciful.' (xlix. 11,12,) و لا تقف ما ليس لك به علم ان السمع و البصر و الفؤاد كل اولئك كان عنه مسئولا. 'And follow not that of which you have not the knowledge;

surely the hearing and the sight and the heart all of these, shall be questioned about that.' (xvii : 36).

FORGIVENESS

Having finished the first division of morals, *viz*, those relating to the avoidance of mischief, we come now to the second heading under which we shall give examples of the moral qualities taught by the Holy Qur'an for doing good to others. The first of these is **عفو** *i.e.*, forgiveness. The person to whom a real injury has been caused has the right to redress by bringing the offender to law or himself dealing out some punishment to him, and, therefore, when he foregoes his right and forgives the offender he does him a real good. The Holy Qur'an contains the following injunctions upon this point: والكاظمين الغيظ والعافين عن الناس. 'And those who restrain (their) anger and pardon men.' (iii. 133). جزاء سيئة سيئة مثلها فمن عفي واصلح فاجره على الله 'The recompense of evil is punishment like it, but whoever forgives and (the forgiveness is exercised on the right occasion so that matter) amends (thereby), he shall have his reward (for it) from God.' (xlii; 40). **This verse furnishes the guiding rule as to**

the occasions of forgiveness. The Holy Qur'an does not teach unconditional forgiveness and non-resistance of evil on every occasion, nor does it inculcate that punishment is not to be given to the offender under any circumstances. The principle which it lays down commends itself to every reasonable person. It requires the injured person to exercise his judgment, and see whether the occasion calls for punishment or forgiveness The course which is calculated to mend the matter should then be adopted. The offender would, under certain circumstances, benefit by forgiveness and mend his ways for the future But on other occasions forgiveness may produce the contrary effect and embolden the culprit to do worse deeds. The Word of God does not, therefore, enjoin nor even permit that we should go on forgiving faults blindly. It requires us to consider and weigh the matter first and see what course is likely to lead to real good. As there are persons of a vindictive nature who carry the spirit of revenge to an excess and do not forget an injury for generations, there are others who are ready to yield and too prone to forgive on every occasion. Excess in mildness, like excess in vengeance, leads to dangerous consequences. The person who winks at gross

immoralities or forbears an attack upon his honour or chastity may be said to forgive; but his forgiveness is a despicable deed and strikes at the root of nobility, chastity and self-respect. No sensible person could praise it as a high moral quality. It is for this reason that the Holy Qur'an places the limits of propriety even upon forgiveness and does not recognize every display of this quality as a moral quality unless it is shown upon the right occasion. The mere giving up of a claim to requital from an offender, whatever the circumstances and however serious the nature of the offence, is far from being a great moral quality to which men should aspire. Nay, the forgetfulness of injuries is a natural quality which we witness even in the child which is not yet able to think and to reason. The mere presence of this quality in a person, therefore, does not entitle him to any credit unless he shows us by its use on the right occasion that he possesses it as a moral quality. The distinction between natural and moral qualities should be clearly borne in mind. The inborn or natural qualities of man are transformed into moral qualities when a person does or refrains from doing an act upon the right occasion and after a due consideration of the good or evil that is

likely to result from it. Many of the lower animals are quite harmless and do not resist when evil is done to them. A cow may be said to be innocent and a lamb meek, but to neither do we attribute the high moral qualities which man aspires after, for they are not gifted with reason and do not know right from wrong. It is the occasion only upon which anything is done that justifies or condemns a deed and the wise and perfect word of the Omniscient God has, therefore, imposed this condition upon every moral quality.

GOODNESS

The second moral quality by means of which man can do good to others is عدل *i.e.*, good for good; the third احسان *i.e.*, kindness; and the fourth ايتاء ذي القربى *i.e.*, the tenderness of kindred. Thus the Holy Qur'an says:

ان الله يامر بالعدل و الاحسان و ايتاء ذى القربى و ينهى عن الفحشاء و المنكر و البغى

'Surely Allah enjoins the doing of justice (to do good for good) and (if you can avail yourselves of an opportunity of doing more than mere justice) the doing of good (to others without having received any benefit), and (if it befits the occasion) the giving (of gifts) to the kindred,

and He forbids indecency and evil and rebellion.' (xvi : 90).

This verse calls attention to three stages in the doing of goodness. The lowest stage is that in which man does good to his benefactors only. Even an ordinary man who has the sense to appreciate the goodness of others can acquire this quality and do good in return for good. From this there is an advancement to the second stage in which a man takes the initiative to do good to others. It consists in bestowing favours upon persons who cannot claim them as a right. This quality, excellent as it is, occupies a middle position. To it often attaches the infirmity that the doer expects thanks or prayers in return for the good he does and the slightest opposition from the object of compassion is termed ungratefulness. He would fain have an acknowledgment of the benefit conferred and is led sometimes to take advantage of his position by laying upon him some burden which the other could not have otherwise willingly borne. To remedy this defect the Holy Qur'an has warned the doer of goodness saying: لا تبطلوا صدقاتكم بالمن والاذي *i.e.*, 'Do not make your charity, (which should proceed from sincere motives), worthless by reproach and injury;

(ii. 264). The word صدقة (*sadaqa*), which is rendered in English into charity, is derived from صدق (*sidq*), meaning sincerity. If, therefore there is no sincerity in the deed, alms are of no effect being mere show. In short, this is an infirmity attached to the noble deed of doing goodness to another that the doer is led sometimes to remind the person relieved of his obligation or boast of it. A third stage has therefore been taught by the Holy Word of God which is free from every imperfection. To attain this perfection man should not think of goodness he has done nor expect even an expression of thankfulness from the person upon whom the benefit is conferred. The idea of doing good should proceed from sincere sympathy like that which is shown by the nearest relatives; by a mother, for instance, towards her children. This is the last and the highest stage of showing kindness to the creatures of God and beyond this man cannot aspire to anything higher. This stage has been termed ایتاء ذی القربی or the kindness of kindred. But from the lowest to the highest form of doing good an essential condition has been imposed upon all, viz. that it should be done on the proper occasion; for the verse affirms, in plain words, that these noble

qualities are liable unless exercised with great care, to degenerate into vices; عدل or the requital of goodness becomes فحشاء or an undue excess productive of harm rather than good; احسان or the doing of simple goodness, becomes منکر *i.e.*, a thing which, when ill-bestowed, conscience rejects and from which reason recoils; ایتاء ذي القربی or the sympathetic feeling like that of kindred, when directed to a wrong end, becomes بغی or oppression. بغی originally means the rain which by its excess destroys the crops. Therefore any excess or deficiency in the doing of that which would otherwise have been most beneficial is termed بغی. Nor, it should be borne in mind, is the mere doing of good in any of the three forms above mentioned, a high moral quality unless attested to as such by the propriety of the occasion and an exercise of judgment. On the other hand, these are the natural conditions and inborn qualities which are transformed into moral qualities by means of a good judgment and by their display on the right occasion.

Upon the subject of احسان or the doing of good the Holy Qur'an has also the following

injunctions in every one of which the definitive ال calls attention to the particular condition that the proper occasion should in each case be observed. Thus it says: يا يها الذين امنوا انفقوا من طيبات ما كسبتم ... و لا تيمموا الخبيث منه تنفقون 'O you who believe ! spend (benevolently by way of charity) of the good things that you earn (*i.e.*: in which there is no mixture of property acquired by theft or bribes or misappropriation or by oppression or by any other dishonest or unjust means);
and do not aim at what is bad that you may spend (in alms) of it.' (ii. 267). لا تبطلوا صدقاتكم بالمن و الاذى كالذى ينفق ماله رياء الناس. 'Do not make your charity worthless by reproach and injury, (i.e., do not remind them of the good you did them, nor injure them in any way; for if you do so your goodness will be of no effect); like him who spends his property to be seen of men.' (ii. 264). احسنوا ان الله يحب المحسنين 'And do good (to the creatures of God), for Allah loves the doers of good.' (ii. 195). ان الابرار يشربون من كاس كان مزاجها كافورا عينا يشرب بها عباد الله يفجرونها تفجيرا 'Surely the righteous shall drink of a cup the

admixture of which is camphor, a fountain from which the servants of Allah shall drink; they make it to flow a (goodly) flowing forth.' (lxxvi 5,6). The word *káfūr*, *i e.*, camphor, is derived from كفر, *kafr*, meaning to suppress and to cover, and therefore by the quaffing of camphor drink is here meant that their unlawful passions shall be suppressed, their hearts shall be cleansed of every impurity, and that they shall be refrigerated with the coolness of the knowledge of God. And then it goes on to say: 'The servants of God, i.e., those who do good, shall drink on the Day of Judgment of a spring which they are making to gush forth with their own hands here.' This verse throws light upon the secret which underlies the true philosophy of Paradise. Let him, who will, attend to it. And further ويطعمون الطعام على حبه مسكينا و يتيما و اسيرا انما نطعمكم لوجه الله لا نريد منكم جزاء ولا شكورا 'And they give food out of love for Him to the poor and the orphan and the capative (though longing for it themselves and say), we only feed you for Allaha's sake; we desire from you neither reward nor thanks.' (lxxvi. 8, 9). This verse recommends the third stage of doing goodness which proceeds out of a sincere

sympathy and seeks no reward, not even an acknowledgment of the obligation conferred.

و اتى المال على حبه ذوى القربى و اليتامى
و المساكين و ابن السبيل و السائلين و في الرقاب

'And give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for (the emancipation of) the captives.' (ii. 177).

و الذين اذا انفقوا لم يسرفوا و لم يقتروا
و كان بين ذلك قواما ' And they who, when they spend, (they) are neither extravagant nor parsimonious, and (keep) between these, the just mean.' (xxv. 67). و الذين يصلون ما امر الله
به ان يوصل و يخشون ربهم و يخافون سوء الحساب.

'And those who join that which Allah has bidden to be joined, and have awe of their Lord and fear the evil reckoning.' (xiii. 21). و في
اموالهم حق للسائل و المحروم ' And in their property was a portion due to him who begs and to him who is denied (good, including all the dumb animals).' (li. 19.) الذين ينفقون في
السراء والضراء ' Those who spend (benevolently) in ease as well as in straitness.' (iii. 133).
و انفقوا مما رزقنا هم سرا وعلانية ' And spend

(benevolently) out of what we have given them secretly and openly. (They give in secret so that there may be no show and openly in order to induce others).' (xiii. 22). انما الصدقات للفقراء والمساكين والعاملين عليها والمؤلفة قلوبهم وفي الرقاب والغارمين وفي سبيل الله وابن السبيل فريضة من الله والله عليم حكيم. 'Alms are only for (*i.e.* should be spent in support of) the poor and the needy, and (to remunerate the services of) the officials (appointed as collectors or distributors), over them and (to save) those whose hearts are made to incline (to truth) and the (ransoming of) captives, those in debt (and insolvent or implicated in other troubles), and in the way of Allah and the way-farer: (this is) an ordinance from Allah and Allah is Knowing (and) Wise.' (ix. 60). لن تنالوا البر حتى تنفقوا مما تحبون . 'By no means shall you attain to righteousness until you spend (in the cause of your fellow-beings) out of what you love.' (iii. 91). وآت ذا القربى حقه والمسكين وابن السبيل ولا تبذر تبذيرا 'And give to the near of kin his due and (to) the needy and way-farer, and do not squander wastefully.' (xvii. 26). This verse forbids prodigality and the squandering away of wealth

in luxury, and at the time of marriage or the birth of a son, or in the observance of other customs.
وبالوالدین احسانا وبذی القربی و الیتامی و
المساکین و الجار ذی القربی و الجار الجنب و
الصاحب بالجنب و ابن السبیل و ما ملکت ایمانکم
ان الله لا یحب من کان مختالا فخورا الذین
یبخلون و یامرون الناس بالبخل و یکتمون ما
اتاهم الله من فضله 'And be good to the parents and to the near of kin and orphans and the needy and the neighbour of (your) kin and alien neighbour, and the companion in a journey and the way-farer and those whom your right hands possess; (be they your slaves or servants or horses or other domestic animals), surely Allah does not love him who is proud, boastful: those who are niggardly and bid people to be niggardly and hide what Allah has given them out of His Grace.' (iv : 36, 37).

COURAGE

The fifth virtue, which resembles the instinct of bravery, is شجاعت or courage. The young human being, when it has no reason, displays bravery and is ready to thrust its hand into fire, because, having no knowledge of the consequences, the instinctive quality is predominant in it. Man in this condition fearlessly rushes even

to the lions and other wild beasts and stands out in the hour of contest alone against whole armies; and people think that he has the courage to do so; but the fact is that it is more a mechanical movement than a noble quality. The dog and wild beasts are on an equality with him upon this ground. The virtue which we call courage (شجاعت) cannot be displayed but after a good deal of reasoning and reflection and after a full consideration of the propriety or impropriety of the act. It is a quality which can be classed as a noble and exalted virtue only when it is displayed on the right occasion, and the Holy Qur'an contains the following directions upon this point: و الصابرين في البأساء و الضراء وحين البأس 'And the patient in distress and affliction and in time of conflict.' (ii. 177). و الذين صبرو ا ابتغاء وجه ربهم 'And those who are constant, seeking the pleasure of their Lord.' (xiii. 22). الذين قال لهم الناس ان الناس قد جمعوا لكم فاخشوهم فزادهم ايمانا و قالوا حسبنا الله ونعم الوكيل. 'Those to whom the people said: Surely men have gathered against you, therefore fear them, but this increased their faith, and they said: Allah is sufficient for us and most

excellent is the Protector.' (iii. 172). Their courage is not like the bravery of dogs and wild beasts, not a mechanical movement depending upon passions and therefore flowing in one direction only, but they utilize their courage in two ways; *viz.*, with its aid they resist and overcome the passions of the flesh sometimes and again utilize it to resist the attacks of an evil-doer when it is advisable to do so, not in obedience to brute force but in the cause of truth. They do not, moreover, trust their own selves but have their confidence in the support of God at the time of trials. لا تكونوا كالذين خرجوا من ديارهم بطرا ورياء الناس 'Be not like those who came forth from their homes in great exultation to be seen of men (*i.e.* other people).' (viii. 47). The truly courageous do not display their bravery in an insolent manner and with a view to appear with ostentation to other men, but their only consideration is the pleasure of God. All this leads to the conclusion that true courage takes its root in patience and steadfastness. The courageous man resists his passions and does not fly from danger like a coward but before he takes any step he looks to the remote consequences of his action. Between the daring dash of a savage and the

indomitable courage of a civilized man there is this vast difference that the one is prepared to meet real dangers but he reasons and reflects, though in the fury and tumult of battle, before he proceeds and takes the course, best suited to avert the evil, while the other, in obedience to an irresistible passion, makes a violent onset in one direction only.

VERACITY

The sixth virtue, which is developed out of the natural conditions, is veracity. So long as there is no incentive to tell a lie, man is naturally inclined to speak the truth. He is averse to lying from his very nature and hates the person who is proved to have told a plain lie. But this natural condition cannot claim our respect as one of the noble moral qualities. Unless a man is purged of the low motives which bar him from truth, his veracity is questionable. For if he speaks truth only in the matters in which truth produces no harm to himself and tells a lie or holds his tongue from the utterance of truth when his life or property or honour is at stake, he can claim no superiority over children and madmen. In fact no one speaks untruth without a motive, and there is no virtue in resorting to truth so long as there is no apprehension

of harm. The only circumstance which can serve as a test of truth is the occasion when one's life or honour or property is in danger. The Holy Qur'an contains the following injunctions upon this point : فاجتنبوا الرجس من الاوثان و اجتنبوا قول الزور. 'Therefore avoid the uncleanness of the idols and avoid false words.' (xxii. 30) The shunning of idols and falsehood is enjoined in the same breath to indicate that falsehood is an idol, and the person who trusts in it does not trust in God for he bows in submission to an idol and does not worship God.. .. .. لا یاب الشهداء اذا ما دعوا. و لا تكتموا الشهادة و من يكتمها فانه اثم قلبه 'The witnesses shall not refuse (to present themselves) when they are summoned.. . ... and do not conceal testimony, and whoever conceals it, his heart is surely sinful.' (ii. 282, 283). واذا قلتم فاعدلوا ولو كان ذا قربى. 'And when you speak (a word or pronounce a judgment), then be just though it be (against) a relative.' (vi ; 153). كونوا قوامين بالقسط شهداء لله ولو على انفسكم او الوالدين والاقربين 'Be maintainers of justice, bearers of witness for Allah's sake, though it may be against your own

selves or (your) parents or near relatives.' (iv. 135). ولا يجرمنكم شنان قوم على الا تعدلوا . 'And let not hatred of a people incite you not to act equitably.' (v. 8). والصادقين والصادقات 'And the truthful men and the truthful women.' (xxxiii. 35). وتواصوا بالحق وتواصوا بالصبر '(They) enjoin on each other, truth, and enjoin on each other patience.' (ciii. 3). لا يشهدون الزور . 'They do not bear witness to what is false.' (xxv. 72).

PATIENCE

Another virtue which develops out of the natural conditions of man is صبر or patience. Every one has more or less to suffer misfortunes, diseases and afflictions which are the common lot of humanity. Everyone, too, has, after much sorrowing and suffering, to make his peace with the misfortunes that befall him. But such contentment is by no means a noble moral quality. It is a natural consequence of the continuance of affliction that weariness at last brings about conciliation. The first shock brings about depression of spirits, inquietude and wails of woe, but when the excitement of the moment is over there is necessarily a reaction, for the extreme has been

reached. But such disappointment and contentment are both the result of natural inclinations. It is only when the loss is received with total resignation to the will of God and in complete submission to His pleasure that the deed deserves to be called virtuous. The word of God thus deals with the noble quality of patience: و لنبلونكم بشيء من الخوف
و الجوع و نقص من الاموال و الانفس و
الثمرات و بشر الصابرين الذين اذا اصابتهم
مصيبة قالوا انا لله و انا اليه راجعون اولئك
عليهم صلوات من ربهم و رحمة و اولئك هم
المهتدون. 'And We will most certainly try you with somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits; and give good news to the patient, who, when a misfortune befalls them, say: Surely we are Allah's, and to Him we shall surely return. Those are they on whom are blessings and mercy from their Lord, and those are the followers of the right course.' (ii. 155-157). In short, it is owing to the quality of patience that a man declares himself satisfied with God's pleasure. In another sense it is also justice; for when God has made numerous provisions in accordance with the pleasure of man and does, on so many

occasions in his life, bring about things as he wills and has provided him with numerous blessings, it would be highly unjust if a man should grumble because Almighty God wills a thing in another way, and should not take the good that God provides with cheerfulness but turn aside from His path.

SYMPATHY

Another quality falling under the same category is sympathetic zeal. People of every nationality and religion are naturally endowed with the feeling of national sympathy, and in their zeal for the intrests of their countrymen or co-religionists throw scruples to the winds and do not hesitate to wrong others. Such sympathetic zeal, however, does not proceed out of moral feelings but is an instinctive passion, and is witnessed even in the lower animals especially ravens in whose case the call of one brings together thousands of them. To be classed as a moral quality, it must be displayed in accordance with the principles of justice and equity and on the proper occasion. It is to express this condition that the Arabic word مواساة meaning sympathy is used. The injunctions of the Holy Qur'an upon this point are as follows :

تعاونوا على البر والتقوى ولا تعاونوا على الاثم والعدوان. 'Help one another in goodness and piety, and do not help one another in sin and aggression.' (v. 2). ولا تهنوا في ابتغاء القوم ... ولا تكن للخائنين خصيما ... .. ولا تجادل عن الذين يختانون انفسهم ان الله لا يحب من كان خوانا اثيما 'And be not weak hearted in pursuit of the enemy (for the sympathy of your people) ... . and be not a disputer on behalf of the treacherous, ... and do not plead on behalf of those who act unfaithfully to their souls; surely Allah does not love him, who is treacherous, sinful.' (iv. 104-10).

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

Of the innate feelings of man, which we see implanted in his very nature, is a search after an Almighty Being to whom he is drawn by a hidden magnetic power acting upon his soul Its first manifestation takes place with the birth of the child. As soon as the child is born it is led by an instinctive desire to incline to its mother, and, corresponding to the maternal instinct of love, it shows an instinctive impulse of attachment to its mother. With its growth and the development of its faculties, this instinct

is displayed more prominently. It finds no rest but in the lap of its mother and no peace but in her tender caresses. Separation from her embitters all its pleasure and no blessing, however great, can atone for the pain caused to it by her loss. It has no consciousness but is impelled by instinct to love its mother and finds no quiet and repose but in her bosom alone. The attraction which thus draws the child towards its parent points to the secret magnetism implanted by nature in the soul of man which draws him to his Creator, the true Object of adoration. It is this same attraction again which excites the affections of man to tend towards, and take their rest in, some external object. Thus we find the principle of attraction towards God distinctly implanted within us and instinctively impressed upon our hearts. The emotions of love, however different the objects which call them forth, are all to be traced to the instinct of 'love for the Creator.' In fixing his affections upon other objects man seems only to be searching for the real object. He has, as it were, lost something of which he has now forgotten the name and seems to be seeking for it under every other object that comes before him. The attraction of wealth, the charm of beauty and the

fascination of sweet and enchanting voices are only so many indications of some greater, nobler and real object of love and of some greater power underlying all these which draws all hearts towards it. But as imperfect human reason cannot comprehend nor the material eye discover this mysterious Being Who, hidden, like heat, in every soul, is invisible to all. A true knowledge of His existence has been attended with the greatest difficulties, and blunders have been made concerning His recognition. Superstition and gross credulity have given the homage due to Invisible God to frail creatures and material things. This blunder has been beautifully illustrated by the Holy Qur'an in a simile where the world is likened to a crystal palace paved with bright glass. Under this transparent floor a strong current of water is flowing. A superficial eye that witnesses the scene, mistakes the glass for the water, being unable to attain to the reality and discover the truth. That through which the water is seen, is wrongly feared as water itself. Such are the great heavenly bodies which we see in the universe, such as the sun, the moon and the stars, which only reveal the existence of the Powerful Being, working behind them all. But faulty human

judgment bows its head in worship before them under the same delusion as the eye in the above instance mistook transparent glass for water. The Being that manifests itself through these glasses is a thing quite different from the bodies themselves. The polytheist is foolish enough to attribute the work which is done by the great Power to the material things through which that power is manifested. Such is the interpretation of the verse اِنَّهٗ صَرْحٌ مُّمَرَّدٌ مِّنْ قَوَارِيْرَ '(This is not water which thou fearest but) surely it is a palace made smooth with glass.' (xxvii. 44).

In short, the person of God, although He reveals Himself manifestly, is invisible and hidden. The material universe cannot lead us to an undeniable conclusion—to absolute certainty regarding the personality of its Author. The consummate order and perfect arrangement which the material eye discovers in the countless heavenly bodies and the numerous wonders which are disclosed to a thinking mind in nature have never led, and can never lead, to the firm conviction, to the greatest certainty of which the mind of man is capable, that there is a God, the Creator and the Lord of the universe, Whose power and knowledge extend over every atom of it. The greatest astronomers and philosophers

who have applied their energies solely to those sciences have been involved in fatal doubts and scepticism as to the existence of God. All their knowledge, if it ever led them to draw the conclusion of the existence of a God, could never go further than set it down among the probabilities. The creation of the sun, the moon and the stars, the order and design witnessed in those orbs which constitute the host of heaven, the consummate laws of order that regulate the universe, the formation of man's body and mind, the marvellous power and wisdom discernible in the government of this universe, no doubt lead all to the conclusion of the probability of the existence of a Creator, but probability does not prove actual existence. This is, in fact, a very low idea and an imperfect knowledge of the existence of God, and there is a vast difference between a probability and a certainty. Unless there is a firm persuasion and a strong conviction that God actually exists, the darkness of doubt cannot be dispelled and true light can never enter the heart. The rational persuasion following from an observation of a plan in the universe can never amount to a certainty and lead to peace and contentment of mind. It is not the wholesome cup of elixir which can wash

off every doubt and quench the thirst which the soul of man naturally feels for a true and perfect knowledge of God. The defective knowledge, which is the result of a study of nature, is fraught with danger, for there is in it more of talk than substantial reality.

In short, unless Almighty God reveals Himself by His word spoken to His servants, as He reveals Himself by His work as witnessed in nature, a rational persuasion of His existence, which is the outcome of an observation of His works, is never satisfactory. If, for instance, the doors of a room are all latched from the inside, the natural inference is that there is some one in the room who has bolted the doors. But if years pass away and no sound is heard from within, no voice in response to the repeated cries of the outsiders for years after years, we shall have to change our opinion as to the presence of some one within and ascribe the event to some incomprehensible circumstance. Such is the view of God following from a study of nature and the whole enquiry brings us but to the extremely disappointing result that chances are in favour of the existence of a God Who created the universe. The fact is that an enquiry relating to the existence of God can

never be complete so long as we consider only one side of the question, viz. : the work of God. The effort is simply misdirected which sets before itself the object of discovering the Creator simply from under the heaps of matter. It is a blasphemy against the glorious and living God that, in the midst of all His creation, He should be likened to the dead body which can only be discovered by digging it out from under heaps of dust. That God with all His infinite wisdom and almighty power should depend upon human efforts in order to be revealed to the world is a shocking idea. God, viewed in this light, can never be the centre of all our hopes and our supporter in all our infirmities. Does God Himself reveal His face to His creatures or are they to seek a clue to His existence for themselves ? Does He show us His presence or are we to search for him? The Eternal and Invisible God has eternally made Himself known by His own clear and blessed voice 'I am', and has thus invited His frail creatures towards Himself that they may seek their support in Him. It is too presumptuous to assert that the Deity lies under an obligation to man because he takes the trouble to discover Him and that, but for man's exertions, He, the Eternal and Immortal King of the

universe, should never have been known to His creation. To object to the palpable and conclusive proof of the real existence of God as furnished by His voice on the ground that He must needs have a tongue then, an idea inconsistent with the existence of a spirit such as God is groundless and audacious. Has He not created the earth and the countless host of heaven without any material hands ? Does He, the All-Seeing, not see the whole world without any material eyes ? Does He not hear the voice of His servants and yet He has not ears like ours ? Is it not necessary, then, that he should speak as He makes, sees and hears ? To object to one while admitting others is quite absurd.

If it be said that although God spoke to the generations of men in the past and made Himself known to them by His own clear voice, yet He does not speak now, I say the assertion is wholly groundless. The unchangeable God Who spoke in the past speaks even now and blesses with His Holy Word such of His servants as seek Him with all their heart and all their soul. The chosen ones of God even now drink deep at the fountain of His inspiration and no one ever set a seal upon the lips of God. His grace

even now flows in abundance and is bestowed upon men as it was bestowed of old. It is true that the revelation of a perfect Law and necessary rules for the guidance of mankind has put an end to the need of a fresh Law to be revealed from the Almighty, and apostleship and prophecy have attained their perfection in the holy person of our Lord and Master, the Prophet Muhammad, may peace and the blessings of God be upon him, but still an access to the sacred fountain of inspiration is not thereby barred. That the Divine Light should have shone from Arabia last of all had also been pre-arranged by Divine wisdom and we can easily discover a purpose in it. The Arabs are descended from Ishmael whom Divine wisdom had cast forth into the wilderness of Paran and thus God cut off all connections of this race with the seed of Israel. Paran (Arabic *Faran*) means the 'two fugitives'. It was destined therefore that those whom Abraham had cast off from himself should have had no share in the Law of Israel, as it had been said that Ishmael 'shall not be heir' with Isaac. The Ishmaelites had, therefore, been isolated from those who were their next of kin and they had no relations with any other people. It is further

apparent that, in all other countries we meet with traces of the laws and doctrines preached by the prophets, a fact clearly indicating that those nations had at one time or other received their teachings from God but Arabia was quite ignorant of these. So far as the influence of the prophets was concerned the Ishmaelites were the most backward people. Now this act of a wise Providence could not be purposeless. Why were the Ishmaelites kept aloof from the whole world and cut off from the prophecy of Israel? The conclusion is irresistible. Arabia was destined to be the final scene of prophetic law-giving and the mission of its Prophet was destined to be universal. He came last of all and, therefore, he came for all, so that he might bless all the nations of the earth and denounce the errors of every people. The transcendent knowledge which he gave to the world is perfect on all sides. The heavenly law which he brought down undertook the heavy task of the complete reformation of men without any distinction of creed or colour. Its injunctions were by no means meant for a single community like those of the earlier books but it fully dealt with all the stages of reformation suited for any people. It gave a universal code to the

world which furnished the necessary guiding rules for the civilization of all men. To root out a few vices from among a particular community had been the object and aim of all previous books, but the Holy Qur'an set before itself the grand and all-absorbing object of furnishing a true remedy for the extermination of all sorts of evil and directions for the guidance of all men. Moreover it has described all the steps necessary for the social, moral and spiritual development of men. It had first to contend with savageness and raise men to the dignity of social beings by inculcating the rules of society. The next step for it was to preach the higher moral doctrines.

The credit of pointing out the true distinction between natural inclinations and moral qualities is also due to the Holy Qur'an. But it did not stop with the teaching of excellent morals; it had yet to raise men a step higher; it had to raise them to the perfection of humanity. It not only opened the door to a holy knowledge of God, to a certainty regarding His existence, but actually raised them to spiritual excellence. It enlightened hundreds of thousands of men regarding the true knowledge of God and established them upon a firm basis with respect

to the certainty of His existence. It gave admirable directions regarding the three-fold advancement of man which I have discussed above. As the Holy Qur'an is a comprehensive code of teachings regarding the perfection of man, it has, therefore, asserted its excellence and comprehensiveness. Thus it says: اليوم اكملت لكم دينكم و اتممت عليكم نعمتى و رضيت لكم الاسلام دينا. 'This day have I perfected for you your religion and completed my favour (and blessings) on you, and chosen for you Islám as a religion.' (v. 3). Now this verse lays down in clear and emphatic terms that religion attains its perfection in Islám, *i.e.*, upon reaching a stage in which, as signified by the word Islám, a person completely resigns himself to the will of God and seeks salvation by the sacrifice of his own self (*i.e.* his interests and desires) and not by any other method, and does not allow this sacrifice to remain a mere matter of theory but shows it in his deeds and practice. It is to this that the word 'Islám' calls attention and all excellences culminate in this point.

The philosophers, therefore, who trusted to their imperfect reason could not discover the

true God. A true knowledge of His existence was given by the Holy Qur'an, the inspired Word of God. The Holy Word suggests two methods of attaining to this knowledge. Firstly, it teaches the course by adopting which human reason is strengthened and sharpened in deducing the reasons of God's existence from the laws of nature and is protected from falling into error. Secondly, it points out the spiritual method which we shall discuss hereafter in answer to the third question.

Under the first heading it has adduced clear and cogent arguments appealing to human reason in support of the existence of God. Thus it says : ربنا الذى اعطى كل شيء خلقه ثم هدى 'Our Lord is He Who gave to everything its creation (suitable to its nature) then guided it (to its goal, to attain its desired perfection).' (xx. 50). Now, if we look to the nature of all creatures from man downward and consider their constitutions and moulds, we shall find the creation of all things surprisingly adapted to their natures. To enter into any details upon this point would be trying the patience of the audience too much. But every one can think volumes for himself upon this subject.

Another argument for the existence of the Divine Being is deduced by the Holy Qur'an from His being the Cause of causes or the First Cause. Thus it says: وأن الى ربك المنتهى 'And that to, you Lord is the goal.' (liii. 42). This argument is based upon the natural order of cause and effect which pervades the universe. The growth of so many sciences is the result of the universal dominion of this order over every part of the world and important laws and principles have been developed out of it. Every cause, which is not itself primary, may be traced to some other cause and this to another and so on. But as the series of cause and effect, taking its rise in this finite world of ours, cannot be infinite, it must terminate at some point. The final cause is, therefore, the Author of the universe. It is to this final or first cause that the verse quoted above calls attention.

Another argument for the existence of the Divine Being is thus described by the Holy Qur'an: لا الشمس ينبغى لها ان تدرك القمر ولا اليل سابق النهار و كل في فلك يسبحون 'Neither is it allowable to the sun that it should overtake the moon, nor can the night outstrip the

day; and all float on, in a sphere.' (xxxvi : 40). Had all these heavenly systems no designer they would soon have been disorganized and ruined. The vast masses of matter rolling in space without disturbing each other's motion demonstrate contrivance and design by the regularity of their motions and hence the Designer. It is not surprising that these innumerable spheres thus rolling on from times immemorial do neither collide, nor alter their courses in the slightest degree, nor show any waste or decay from their constant motion ? How could such a grand machinery work on without any disorder for numberless years unless it were in accordance with the intention and contrivance of a Supreme Contriver? Alluding to this consummate Divine Wisdom, Almighty God says elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an: افي الله شك فاطر السماوات و الارض 'Is there doubt abont Allah, the Maker of the heavens and the earth ? ' (xiv : 10).

Another argument relating to the existence of a Creator is thus put forth by the Holy Quran : كل من عليها فان و يبقى وجه ربك ذو الجلال و الاكرام ' Every one on it must pass away. And there will endure for ever the

Person of your Lord, the Lord of glory and honour.' (lv : 26,27). Now if we suppose the earth reduced to nothing and the heavenly bodies all brought to destruction and the whole material universe made non-existent, still reason and conscience require that something should remain, after everything has thus been reduced to nothing, which should never die out nor be ever subject to change or decay. Such a being is God Who brought everything into existence from nothing.

In another place, the Holy Qur'an adduces the following argument in support of the existence of God : ألست بربكم قالوا بلي . 'Am I not Your Lord? They said: Yes!' (vii : 172). In this verse Almighty God relates in the form of a dialogue a characteristic of the soul which He has implanted in its nature, *viz*: that it is not in the nature of soul to deny the existence of God. The atheist rejects the existence of the Divine Being, not because his nature revolts against it but because he thinks that he has no proof of His existence. Notwithstanding this denial, he would admit that every effect has a corresponding cause. No sane person in the world holds that a certain disease for instance is not attributable to any cause. A

denial of the system of cause and effect overthrows all principles and all sciences. All sorts of calculations which determine the times of eclipses, storms, earthquakes, etc, and all other inferences would become impossible if every effect were not due to a particular cause. A philosopher therefore, though denying the personality of God, cannot dispute the existence of the first cause as he cannot reject the whole system of cause and effect. This is virtually an admission of the existence of God. Besides this, if a denier of the existence of God be made senseless so that he may by utterly unconscious of the low desires and motives of this world and solely under the direction and guidance of a higher Being, he will in this state admit the existence of God as experience has so often proved. The verse above quoted thus tells us that a denial of the existence of God is persisted in only so long as the lower desires of man have the upper hand and that pure nature is strongly impressed with the fact of the existence of a Divine Being.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

The above are only a few of the numerous arguments for the existence of the Divine Being which the Holy Qur'an has mentioned. We

shall next consider the attributes of the Almighty Being as taught by the Holy Word of God. The following are only a few examples of the treatment of this subject in the Holy Qur'an: هو الله الذي لا اله الا هو عالم الغيب و الشهادة هو الرحمن الرحيم . 'He is Allah besides Whom there is no God: the Knower of the unseen and the seen; He is the Benificent, the Merciful' (lix ; 22). The idea of a partner with God is negatived because if God had a rival, His Divinity would be liable at some time to pass wholly to His rival. Further, the words, 'no one deserves to be worshipped but He', signify that He is a perfect God Whose attributes, beauties and excellences are so high and exalted that if we were to select a God from among the existing things, whose selection depended upon the perfection of His attributes, or if we were to suppose certain qualities as the highest and most excellent attributes of God, nothing would approach Him in His perfection and in the excellence of His attributes. Injustice, therefore, could go no further than set up a partner or a rival with such a Being.

His next attribute, as the verse above quoted indicates, is that He is عالم الغيب *i.e.* the

'Knower of His Own Person.' In other words, no one can comprehend His Person with limited human faculties. We can comprehend everything that has been created; for instance, the sun, the moon, etc., in its entirety, but cannot comprehend God in His entirety. The verse then goes on to say that He is عالم الشهادة *i.e.* 'He knows everthing, and nothing lies hidden from Him.' It would be inconsistent with the idea of His Divinity that He should be ignorant of His Own creation. He looks to every small particle of the universe but man cannot do this. God knows when He shall put an end to this system and bring a general destruction over all things but no one else knows this. God only is He Who knows the time of the happening of all things

هو الرحمن *i.e.* 'God is He Who provides, out of His bountiful mercy, and not in return for anything done by the creatures, all the means of happiness for all living beings before their creation.' We see the manifestation of this attribute in God's creation of the sun, the moon and numerous other things for the benefit of men before they or their deeds ever existed. This gift of the Divine Being is due to His

attribute of رحمانية (*rahmániyyat*) or mercy, and it is when this attribute is at work that He is called الرحمن (*Ar-Rahmán*) or the Merciful. With respect to another attribute of God, He is called الرحيم i.e. 'The God Who gives a good reward for the good deeds of His creatures and does not waste any one's labour.' Thus displayed, His mercy is called رحيميت (*rahīmiyyat*) and the merciful God Himself الرحيم (*Ar-Rahīm*).

Again God is described as مالك يوم الدين *i.e.* 'Master of the day of requital.' (1: 3). In other words, He Himself judges the whole world. He has not made over the dominion of earth and heavens to anybody else so as not to have any connection with His creatures, nor has He entrusted the business of judgment to any particular person who might have got the sole authority to judge the world.

God is also الملك القدوس i. e. 'The King, the Holy (Who is without a stain of fault or deficiency).' (lxii: 1). The kingdom of God is not like earthly kingdoms which may pass into other hands or cease to exist of themselves. The subjects may all emigrate to another country and thus leave the

ruler without anything to rule over. A general prevalency of famine will surely reduce the ruler to something less than a beggar. If the subjects as a body rise against the monarch and contest his superiority to rule over them, he must give up the reins of monarchy. Such is not however, the character of the kingdom of God. He has the power to destroy the whole creation and bring new creatures into existence. Had he not been Omnipotent, He should have been obliged to have recourse to injustice in His dealings with His creatures. A forgiveness and salvation of the whole of His first creation would have necessitated the injustice of sending them back to this world to be tried again, for having no power to create new souls, the world should either have been left without any souls or the Almighty would have been obliged to take back the salvation which He had first granted. Either of these courses could not have been consistent with Divine perfection and, if adopted, would have placed the Divine Being on a level with imperfect earthly rulers. The laws which governments make for the management of their affairs are always defective, and when obliged to have recourse to measures of oppression and injustice they look upon them as based upon

principles of justice and equity. Temporal Governments, for instance, deem it lawful to drown a boat with its crew when it is likely to collide with a ship and, therefore, liable to cause a great loss of life and property. But it is not consistent with the idea of Divinity that God should be driven to such an extremity that the adoption of either of two defective courses should become inevitable. If, therefore, He is not Omnipotent, or has not the power to create everything from nothing, we can only liken Him to the ruler of a petty state who must either use oppression to keep up his divinity or, being just, must be left without a world to rule over. But the God of power is free from every such defect and the mighty ship of His power floats upon the ocean of justice and equity.

The next attribute of the Divine Being is contained in His name السلام, i.e. He is the God of peace Who is Himself safe and secure against every defect, adversity or hardship, and provides safety and security for others. The significance of this attribute is evident; for, if He Himself had been a prey to suffering and adversity, persecuted and beaten by men, or

unable to carry out His own designs, no heart would ever have looked to Him in trials and afflictions in the hope of deliverance. Thus He says of the false deities: ان الذين تدعون من دون الله لن يخلقوا ذبابا و لوا جتمعوا له و ان يسلبهم الذباب شيئا لا يستنقذوه منه ضعف الطالب و المطلوب ما قدروا الله حق قدره ان الله لقوى عزيز. 'Surely those whom you call upon besides Allah cannot create a fly, though they should all gather for it, and should the fly carry off aught from them, they could not take it back from it; weak are the invoker and the invoked. (Such weak things cannot be deities, but the true Deity is Allah, Who is more powerful than every powerful being. They have not estimated Allah with the estimation that is due to Him; most surely Allah is Strong, Mighty.' (xxii. 73 : 74).

With reference to another attribute of God, He is called المؤمن, i.e. 'The Granter of security and the Establisher of arguments for His Own unity and excellence.' This attribute calls attention to the fact that the believer in the true God may consider himself safe on every occasion. He is not ashamed before

people because he has strong and cogent arguments in support of his assertion, nor shall he be ashamed before God. But the worshipper of a self-made deity is always in trouble. Having no arguments in his favour, he takes every foolish assertion which is contrary to reason for a deep mystery so that under that name his absurdities and errors may pass for something transcending human reason.

The verse which has partly been quoted above, then goes on to say: المهيمن العزيز الجبار المتكبر i.e. 'Guardian over all, the Mighty, the Supreme, the Possessor of every greatness.' (lix. 23). And again: هو الله الخالق البارئ المصور له الاسماء الحسنى. 'He is Allah, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner (of the image in the womb), His are the most excellent names.' (lix. 24). يسبح له ما في السموات والارض وهو العزيز الحكيم 'Whatever is in the heavens and the earth declares His glory, and He is the Mighty, the Wise (lix. 24). This verse shows that there are inhabitants in the heavenly bodies who follow the Divine rules of guidance.

Again the Holy Qur'an describes God as علي كل شيء قدير, i.e., 'His power extends over everything.' This is the real source of comfort for the worshippers of the true God, for how could man centre all his hopes in Him if He himself were weak? Elsewhere we also have اجيب دعوة الداع اذا دعان. 'I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me.' (ii : 186) and again رب العالمين الرحمن الرحيم مالك يوم الدين. 'The Lord of the worlds, the Merciful, the Beneficent, Master of the day of requital (listening to supplications and answering them, i.e., the Acceptor of prayers).' (i : 1-3); And again الحي القيوم 'The Ever-living (the Source of all life, the Supporter of all).' (ii : 255). God is here described as eternal and everlasting in order to exclude all notion of His death, never leaving His worshippers without a master. قل هو الله احد الله الصمد لم يلد و لم يولد و لم يكن له كفوا احد 'Say: He, Allah, is One, Allah is He on Whom all depend. He begets not, nor is He begotten: and none is like Him.' (cxii : 1-4).

It should be borne in mind that justice in relation to the Creator consists in being firmly

established upon the true path of Divine Unity without deviating a hair's breadth from it. The moral injunctions to which I have here called attention, form a part of the ethical teachings of the Holy Qur'an. The most conspicuous feature of all these teachings is a perfect freedom from excess and default. The Holy Qur'an does not categorise any quality as a moral quality unless it is within the proper limitations. It need not be demonstrated that virtue lies in the middle course; in other words, it is a mean between two extremes. Whatever inclines a man to the middle path and establishes him in the mean course is conducive to good morals. The man who acts on the right occasion follows the mean path which alone can lead to any good. The farmer who scatters the seed upon his field either too late or too early departs, in so doing, from the middle path and the result would be a waste of seed. Virtue, truth and wisdom all lie in the middle path and he only can walk in that path who watches for the opportunity. Between two falsehoods, which occupy either extreme, lies the mindle course, the path of truth, which can be kept only by the observance of the right occasion. As in other moral qualities, the middle path should be adhered to in the

recognition of the existence of God. The mean in this consists in avoiding, on the one hand, the view of God which divests the Divine Being of every attribute, and in rejecting, on the other, the view which likens Him to things material. This is the position which the Holy Qur'an has taken with regard to the attributes of the Divine Being. It recognizes Him as Seeing, Hearing, Knowing, Speaking, etc., but cautions us at the same time not to liken Him to anything which our senses can comprehend. Thus it says : ليس كمثله شيء 'Nothing is like a likeness of Him.' (xlii: 11). فلا تضربو االله الامثال. 'Therefore do not give a likeness to Allah.' (xvi : 74). Being like to us in some of His actions, He is yet a pure Being, such is the true conception of God. In short, Islám adopts the golden mean in all its teachings. The opening sura of the Holy Qur'an inculcates the adoption of the mean path when it teaches the well-known prayer : اهدنا الصراط المستقيم صراط الذين انعمت عليهم غير المغضوب عليهم ولاالضالين. 'Guide us in the right path, the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favour, not those upon whom wrath is brought down, nor those who go astray'? (i : 5-7).

In this verse three sorts of people have been mentioned. First of all, there are the مغضوب عليهم by which the Holy Qur'an alludes to people who assume an attitude of anger against God and thus following their own savage inclinations call down the wrath of God upon themselves. Then there are the ضالين by which are intended people who are led astray by following their bastial inclinations and their delusions. Midway between these two extremes are the people who walk in the right (the middle) path and whom the Holy Qur'an denominates انعمت عليهم. In fact to direct people in the middle path is the one object of the Holy Qur'an. Moses laid stress upon retaliation and Jesus upon forbearance, but the Holy Qur'an taught the use of both in their proper places. Elsewhere in the Holy Qur'an we have و كذلك جعلناكم امةً وسطا 'And thus we have made you, an exalted nation.' (ii. 143). Blessed are they who adopt this course, for as the Arabic proverb says, 'The golden mean is the best.'

THE SPIRITUAL CONDITIONS

We shall now consider the third stage of man's development, viz., his spiritual conditions.

We have already stated in the beginning of this discourse that the source of the spiritual conditions is the نفس مطمئنة or the soul at rest which takes a man onward in his moral progress and makes him godly; in other words, transports him from the moral to the spiritual regions. Upon this topic the following verse has a plain bearing. يايتها النفس المطمئنة ارجعی الی ربك راضية مرضية فادخلی فی عبادی و ادخلی جنتی 'O (thou) soul! that art at rest (and restest fully contented with thy Lord,) return to your Lord, well pleased (with Him), well-pleasing (Him), so enter among My servants and enter into My garden'. (lxxxix; 27-30). In discussing the spiritual conditions, it is necessary to comment upon this verse in some detail. It should be borne in mind that the highest spiritual condition to which man can aspire in this world is that he should rest contented with God and find his quietude, his happiness and his delight in Him alone. This is the stage of life which we term the heavenly life. The pure and perfect sincerity, truth and righteousness of a person are rewarded by Almighty God by granting him a heaven upon this earth. All others look to a prospective paradise but he enters paradise in this very life. It is at this

stage, too, that a person realizes that the prayers and worship which at first appeared to him as a burden, are really a nourishment on which the growth of his soul depends and that this is the basis of his spiritual development. He then sees that the fruit of his efforts is not to be reaped in a future life only. The spirit, which, in the second stage, although blaming a man for the impurities of life, was yet powerless to resist the evil tendencies or to blot them out wholly and too infirm to establish a man upon the principle of virtue with firmness, now reaches a stage of development in which its efforts are crowned with success. The sensual passions die out of themselves and the soul no more stumbles but, strengthened with the spirit of God, is ashamed of its past failings. The state of struggle with sinful propensities passes away; an entire change passes over the nature of man and the former habits undergo a complete transformation. He is perfectly estranged from his former courses of life. He is washed of all impurities and perfectly cleansed. God Himself plants the love of virtue in his heart and purifies it of the defilement of evil with His own hand. The hosts of truth encamp in his heart and righteousness controls

all the towers of his heart. Truth is victorious and falsehood lays down its arms and is reduced to subjection. The hand of God sways over his heart and he walks every step under His shelter. It is to this state of the quietude of mind in virtue that the following verses point:

أولئك كتب في قلوبهم الايمان وايدهم بروح منه

'These are they into whose hearts He has impressed faith, and whom He has strengthened with an inspiration from Him.' (lviii : 22).

ولكن الله حبب اليكم الايمان و زينه في قلوبكم وكره اليكم الكفر والفسوق والعصيان اولئك هم الراشدون فضلا من الله ونعمة والله عليم حكيم

'But Allah has endeared the faith to you and has made it seemly in your hearts, and he has made hateful to you unbelief and transgression and disobedience; these it is that are the followers of a right way, by grace from Allah and as a favour; and Allah is knowing, Wise.' (xlix. 7,8).

جاء الحق وزهق الباطل ان الباطل كان زهوقا

'The truth has come and the falsehood vanished; surely falsehood is a vanishing (thing)'. (xvii. 81).

In short, such are the words of the Holy Qur'an relating to the third stage of the

advancement of the spirit. The person who has not realized this state is without true sight. We must also mark the words that God engraved faith with His own hand upon their hearts and strengthened them with the holy spirit. These words can bear no other signification than this that the attainment of true purity and righteousness is impossible except through heavenly aid. In the second stage of the spirit, which we have termed the self-accusing spirit, there is a struggle between the good and the evil tendencies. A person feels the compunctions of his good nature for a time but the evil propensities again get the upper hand. He is conscious of his fall and sometimes even despairs of his reformation and of a complete victory of his good nature over the evil tendencies for a while in this stage. When the period of his spiritual struggle is over, a light descends upon him accompanied with Divine strength. The descent of this light works a wonderful transformation in his soul and he feels a strong invisible hand leading him onward. A new world discloses itself to his sight and he then witnesses the existence of God. His eyes brighten with a new light and things are revealed to him which at first he was

unable to see. But how can we find out this path and how attain this light? No effect can be produced without a cause, no end is attained without the means thereto and no knowledge is obtained without treading in a particular path leading straight to it. The rules of nature cannot be broken. The laws of nature amply testify that to procure a thing there is a right way, and that its attainment is necessarily dependent upon the adoption of that particular course. If we are sitting in a dark room and need the light of the sun, the right thing for us to do is to open the doors opposite to the sun. Then shall light entering into it illumine all its corners. In like manner, there must be a door through which the blessings and favours of God can be received and a method by which the spiritual state can be attained. Therefore it is our duty to seek this right road for our spiritual welfare as we are engaged day and night in search of means which are calculated to better our physical or temporal state. But the question is whether that road can be discovered by the weak efforts of reason and whether we can successfully seek a union in God by the ingenuity of our own mind? Is it true that mere logic and philosophy may open for us the doors which,

experience tells us, can only be opened by the powerful hand of God? Not at all; mere human devices can never reveal to us the shining face of the living and supporting God. Let him who would walk on the right path, first of all completely submit himself with all his faculties and powers to the will of God and then pray unceasingly and untiringly for the Divine union and thus realize the truth of Divine existence through Divine assistance. The most excellent prayer in this respect put in proper and opportune words and adapted best to meet the requirements of human nature, drawing at the same time a faithful picture of the natural zeal of the soul, is that taught by the Holy Qur'an in its opening sura and it runs thus: بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم. 'In the name of Allah, the Beneficent the Merciful. الحمد لله رب العالمين 'All (holy) praise is due to Allah, the Lord of (all) the Worlds.' (i: 1). الرحمن الرحيم. 'The Beneficent, the Merciful (God Who out of His mercy provides for our welfare, before we have done aught to deserve it, the Merciful God Who rewards our deeds mercifully).' مالك يوم الدين. Master of the day of requital, (Who has not given to

any one else His right to judge His creatures).' (i: 3). اياك نعبد واياك نستعين . 'Thee (alone) do we serve and Thee (alone) do we beseech for help (in all matters).' (i: 4). The use of the plural 'we' in this verse indicates that all the faculties are engaged in Divine worship and working in complete submission to God, for man, considered with reference to his internal faculties, is regarded not as an individual but as a class. This total resignation of all faculties to the will of God is the true signification of the word Islam. اهدنا الصراط المستقيم صراط الذين انعمت عليهم . 'Guide us, (O Lord!) on the right path (which leads to Thee and let it be so that, remaining firm in that path, we may be guided to walk on) the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours.' (i: 5, 6). غير المغضوب عليهم ولا الضالين . 'Not those upon whom wrath is brought down, nor those who go astray, (and not reached Thee).' (i: 6). امين . 'Be it so, O God.'

It is clear from these verses that the blessings of God, *i.e.*, His favours, descend upon presons who sacrifice their lives and all their interests in the path of God, make a complete submission to Him and resign themselves wholly to His will

and then supplicate Him to grant them all the spiritual blessings which man can attain of the nearness and union of God, and of speaking to, and being addressed by Him. They engage all their faculties in devotion to God, eschew every act of disobedience and prostrate themselves before Him. They shun, so far as possible, every path of evil and avoid occasions of the wrath of God. They seek God with true sincerity and exalted magnanimity and their efforts are, therefore, crowned with success, and they are made to drink of the cup of the knowledge of God. The verse further refers to constancy in the path of God, thus indicating that the Divine blessings which bring about the spiritual state do not flow in their fullness unless a person shows a firmness and a sincerity unshaken under the severest trials. He must have a union which cannot be cut asunder by swords nor burned by fire: adversity cannot loosen the tie, the death of the nearest relatives has not the slightest effect upon it, the separation of dear objects does not interfere with it and the most fearful, calamities do not shake it. Narrow is the door indeed and difficult the path! Ah, what a mountain to ascend! The following verse of the Holy Qur'an calls attention

to this difficult point :

قل ان كان اباؤكم و ابناؤكم و اخوانكم
و ازواجكم و عشيرتكم و اموال اقترفتموها
و تجارة تخشون كسادها و مساكن ترضونها
احب اليكم من الله و رسوله و جهاد في
سبيله فتربصوا حتى ياتي الله بامره والله
لا يهدي القوم الفاسقين۔

'Say: If your fathers and your sons and your brethren and your mates and your kinsfolk and property which you have acquired, and trade, the dullness of which you fear and dwellings which you like, are dearer to you than Allah and His Apostle and striving in His way, then wait till Allah brings about His command; and Allah does not guide the transgressing people'. (ix : 24). It appears from this verse that those who love their wealth and kindred in preference to the will of God are transgressors in the sight of God. Their end is described as destruction for having given preference to other things over God.

This is the third stage of advancement and it is on reaching this stage that a person becomes godly provided that he is willing to subject himself to every disgrace and affliction for the sake of God, and turns to Him with such

exclusive devotion and sincerity as to regard all others beside Him as dead. But the truth is that it is impossible for us to see the Living God unless a death comes first over all our passions and desires. The day on which death comes over our earthly life is the day of the triumph of spirituality and the day of the revelation of the Divine Being. We are blind as long as we are not blind to all other sights, and we are lifeless as long as we are not lifeless under the hand of God. The uprightness which enables us to overcome all carnal passions is granted to us only when our face is directly opposite to God. Uprightness deals a death-blow to all carnal desires and it is to this state that the words بلىٰ من اسلم وجهه لله وهو محسن 'Yea! whoever submits himself entirely to allah and he is the doer of good (to others)' (ii : 112), call attention, requiring, that we should bow down our neck in complete submission to Him. This stage of uprightness is not attained unless all the members of our body and all the faculties which sustain us are made to work in total submission to God and our life and death have no other object but the pleasure of God, and is elsewhere said : قل ان صلوتى ونسكى ومحياي ومماتى لله رب لعالمين 'Say':

Surely my prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are (all) for (the sake) of Allah' (vi. 163). When man's love for God is so great, when his life and death have no interest for himself but are solely for the sake of God, then God, Who loves those who love Him, causes His love to descend upon that person. From the union of these two loves springs up a light which cannot be seen or realized by those who are bent low upon this earth. Thousands of the faithful and righteous have been murdered in cold blood by the worldly-minded because the world was blind to the light which descended upon them. They were looked upon by the world as covetous and deceitful contrivers for it could not see their bright faces. The Holy Qur'an attests to this spiritual blindness in the following words: ينظرون اليك وهم لا يبصرون '(The unbelievers are) looking towards you, yet they do not see' (vii : 198).

In short, an earthly person becomes a heavenly being when illumined by the heavenly light. The Author of all existence speaks within him and illumines him with the lustre of Divinity. His heart which overflows with the love of his Divine Master becomes .od's habitation and the throne of His glory. From

the moment that such a man is renewed, having undergone a pure transformation, God also becomes new to him, for His dealings and laws with him are changed. Not that God becomes new or His laws or dealings are new but that these laws or dealings are distinct from those displayed in connection with the masses of men, and such as the worldly wise are not cognizant of. It is to such transformation that the following verse of the Holy Qur'an refers: ومن الناس من يشرى نفسه ابتغاء مرضات الله والله رؤف بالعباد 'And among men is he (type of perfection who is lost in search of the pleasure of God) who sells himself to seek the pleasure of Allah; And Allah is affectionate to, the servants.' (ii : 207). Such is the case of the person who has attained the spiritual stage of perfection, viz, that he sacrifices himself in the path of God. In the verse quoted here we are told that the mercy of God encompasses the person and consequently he only is delivered from all sufferings and sins who gives himself away in the path of God and Divine pleasure and with this sacrifice gives proof of his exclusive devotion to God. He regards himself as having been created for no other object but the

obedience of God and sympathy for His creatures. When he has thus submitted his will and intention to the will of God, every faculty is engaged in the performance of pure virtue, not formally or coldly but with sincere interest, zeal and pleasure as if actually seeing his Master in the looking-glass of his obedience and submission. The intention of God becomes his intention and he has no delight but in obedience to Him. He does not perform good or virtuous deeds simply on account of their goodness but his very nature is drawn in that direction and he finds his highest pleasure and bliss in them. This is the paradise upon earth which is granted to the spiritual man, and the promised heaven in the next world is only an image of the present paradise, being an embodiment of the spiritual blessings which a man enjoys even here. Referring to this Almighty God says: ولمن خاف مقام ربه جنتان 'And for him who fears to stand (in awe of His Majesty and Glory) before his Lord, are two gardens (one in this world and the other in the life to come)'. (lv : 46). وسقاهم ربهم شرابا طهورا 'And their Lord shall make them drink a pure drink.' (lxxvi : 21).

ان الابرار يشربون من كاس كان مزاجها
كافورا عينا يشرب بها عباد الله يفجرونها تفجيرا

'Surely the righteous shall drink of a cup the admixture of which is camphor, a fountain from which the servants of Allah shall drink; they make it to flow a (goodly) flowing forth'. (lxxvi : 5,6). The word *káfur* used in connection with the state of the just is derived, as already indicated, from كفر (*kafr*) meaning to cover and to suppress, and refers to the total extinction of worldly love and the complete suppression of all the worldly desires of those who have drunk of the cup of love of God and severance from all other connections with true sincerity. It is plain that passions take their growth in the heart, and if the heart is removed farther off from impurities, the passions lessen gradually and ultimately die out. The more a man leans towards God, the farther off he is from the control of carnal passions, and therefore the righteous who trust to God only for support have their hearts cooled from the fire of passion and their sensual desires as completely suppressed as poisonous matter by camphor.

The verse then goes on to say : و يسقون فيها كاسا كان مزاجها زنجبيلا عينا فيها تسمى سلسبيلا 'And (after they have drunk of the cup tempered with camphor), they shall be made to drink therein a cup the admixture of which

shall be ginger, (of) a fountain therein which is named Salsabil'. (lxxvi : 17, 18). The last word requires a brief note. *Zanjbeel* is a compound of زنا (*zana*) and جبل (*jabl*). Of these component parts the first means 'to ascend' and the second 'mountain.' The compound word زنجبيل therefore means 'he ascended the mountain.' Now, from a severe attack of a poisonons disease to perfect restoration of health there are two stages. In the first stage the poisonous germs are completely destroyed, the violence of the attack is mitigated and the danger which threatened life itself is over. But the weakness which is the result of the attack does not vanish with the poison. The patient, though out of danger, cannot be said to be in sound health unless strength is restored to him. If he stumbles and falls he is not yet a healthy man. The second stage of restoration is, therefore, that in which the patient regains his strength. The body is again full of life and vigour and he is not only able to walk with firm legs upon even ground but has courage and strength to try the ascent of a steep mountain and scale the heights cheerfully and without any fear. This is the spiritual state which a person attains in the third stage of development.

It is in reference to this stage that Almighty God says of the perfectly righteous that they are made to drink of a cup tempered with *zanjbeel*, i.e., having attained full spiritual strength, they are able to go up steep mountainous paths, accomplish most difficult tasks and perform astonishing deeds of sacrifice in the path of God.

It should also be borne in mind in connection with this point that *zanjbeel*, or ginger, is the root of a plant very useful in promoting the natural heat of the body. The name given to it points to this property, for it gives strength to, and generates heat in, the weak body so as to enable a man to ascend precipitous heights. These two verses in which *káfūr* and *zanjbeel* are respectively spoken of call attention to the two stages through which a person must pass in order to make an advancement from the low position of the slavery of passion to the heights of virtue and righteousness. After the first movement which a man makes to rise the first stage is that in which the poisonous matters are suppressed and the flood of passions begins to subside. This we may term the *káfūr* stage ; for in this stage what is effected is only the suppression of the poisonous matter just as *káfūr*

has the property of nullifying the effect of poison. But the strength which is required to overcome all difficulties is only acquired in the second stage which is hence called the *zanjbeel* (or the strengthening) stage. The spiritual *zanjbeel* which has the effect of a tonic on the spiritual system is the manifestation of Divine Beauty and Glory which afford nourishment to the soul. Braced with this manifestation, man is able to traverse the dreary deserts and climb the steep heights which the spiritual wayfarer must pass to reach the goal. The wonderful deeds of self-sacrifice that he is then able to perform are beyond the comprehension of one whose heart is devoid of the zeal of love. To bring these two spiritual stages nearer to the understanding of men, two words have been adopted in the Holy Qur'an, viz. *Káfūr*, or that which suppresses the poisonous matters, and *zanjbeel*, or that which gives strength to ascend the heights and overcome all difficulties.

The verses quoted above go on to say: انا اعتدنا للــكافرين سلا سلا و اغلا لا و سعيرا 'Surely, We have prepared for the unbelivers (those who would not accept the truth), chains and shackles and a burning fire.' (lxxvi : 4). This verse signifies that those who do not

seek God with a true heart are, by the Divine laws, repaid in their own coin. Their entanglements in their worldly affairs do not allow them to move a step as if their feet had been enchained; they are bent so low upon the mean cares of the world that they appear to have collars round their necks which do do not allow them to raise their heads heavenward; their hearts burn with carnal desire and greed to gain property or overthrow a certain rival. Since God finds them engaged in low desires and unfit for higher and sublimer pursuits, therefore, He makes these three afflictions, *viz.*, chains, collars and fire, their constant companions. There is also an allusion here to the fact that every deed which a man does is followed by a corresponding deed of Almighty God. If a man, for instance, closes all the doors of his room, the darkness that follows is an act of God. In fact, whatever we term the natural consequences of certain deeds of ours are really the deeds of God; for God is the cause of causes. The taking of poison is a man's own deed but this shall be followed by God's punishing him with death. As in the material world, so too in the spiritual, the law holds good that whatever is done, is followed by a necessary

consequence. The Holy Qur'an refers to this law in two different instances. Thus it says in one place: الذين جاهدوا فينا لنهدينهم سبلنا 'And (as for) those who strive hard for Us, We, will most certaindly guide then in Our ways.' (xxix : 69). And else where. 'But when they turned aside, Allah made their hearts turn aside.' (lxi : 5). فلما زاغوا ازاغ الله قلوبهم This point has been further explained in the following verse of the Holy Qur'an: من كان في هذه اعمى فهو في الآخرة اعمى واضل سبيلا 'Whoever is blind in this, he shall (also) be blind in the hereafter, and more erring from the way.' (xvii : 72) These words clearly indicate that it is in this life that the righteous see the face of God and that it is in this very world that He appears to them in all His majesty and glory. In short, it is in this world that a heavenly life begins and it is here, and not hereafter, that the basis of a hellish life is laid in the impurities of this life and blindness to spiritual facts.

Another verse bearing upon this subject runs thus: وبشر الذين امنوا وعملوا الصالحات ان لهم جنات تجري من تحتها الانهار. 'And convey good news to those who believe and do

good deeds, that they shall have gardens in which rivers flow.' (ii : 25). In this verse Almighty God compares belief to gardens beneath which rivers flow. These words reveal a deep secret indicating the connection between faith and good deeds. As trees would wither away if they were not watered, so faith without good deeds is dead. Faith without deeds is useless, and good deeds not actuated by faith are a mere show. The Islamic paradise is a true representation of the faith and good deeds of this world. Every man's paradise is an image of what he has done here below. It does not come from without but grows from within a man himself. It is his own faith and his own good deeds that take the form of a paradise for him to live in and its delight is tasted in this very life. The tree of faith and the streams of good deeds are even here discernable though not manifest; but in the next world all veils that hide them from the eye shall be uplifted and their existence shall be palpably felt. The perfect teaching of the Holy world of God tells us that true, pure, strong and perfect faith in God, His attributes and His will, is a delightful garden of fruitful trees, while the good deeds which a man does are, in fact, the streams

flowing in the garden and giving life and fruit to its trees. The same idea is elsewhere expressed in the Holy Qur'an in the following words: مثلا كلمة طيبة كشجرة طيبة اصلها ثابت و فرعها في السماء توتي اكلها كل حين 'A good word (being) like a good tree, whose root is firm and whose branches are high, yielding its fruit in every season.' (xiv : 24, 25). By comparing a good word of faith to a good tree that ever yields its fruit Almighty God has called attention to three facts: (1) That its root, which indicates its true signification, should be firmly fixed in the earth which represents the heart of man. The firm fixture of the root indicates the unqualified acceptance of the reality and truth of the faith by the nature and conscience of man. (2) That its branches should be in heaven, i e., reason should attest to its truth and the heavenly laws of nature being the work of God should agree with it. In other words, that arguments of its truth should be deducible from the laws of nature and should be so high as if they were in heaven, being above every objection. (3) Its third sign is that it yields its fruit without ceasing, i.e. its influence and blessings are never intercepted and are felt in every age and every country. It is not true that they exist for a

time and then cease. Another verse then follows: مثل كلمة خبيثة كشجرة خبيثة اجتثت من فوق الارض ما لها من قرار 'The parable of an evil word is as an evil tree pulled up from the earth's surface, (*i.e.* rejected by the nature and conscience of man). It has no stability, (*i.e.* is neither supported by arguments nor by the laws of nature and is a mere assertion or an idle tale).' (xiv : 26).

It should, therefore, be borne in mind that as the Holy Qur'an has compared the holy words of faith to plants bearing delicious fruits such as grapes, pomegranates, etc., as being embodiments of what is spiritually enjoyable in this world, it has also described the evil tree of unbelief under the name of زقوم (*zaqqoom*). Thus it says: اذلك خير نزلا ام شجرة الزقوم انا جعلناها فتنة للظالمين انها شجرة تخرج في اصل الجحيم طلعها كانه رءوس الشياطين 'Is this better as an entertainment or the tree of Zaqqum? Surely We have made it to be a trial to the unjust. Surely it is a tree that grows in the bottom of the hell; its produce is as it were the heads of the serpent.' (xxxvii : 62-65).

شيطان *shaitan* or satan means one whose end is destruction, being derived from شيط meaning to perish. What is meant by these words is that the eating of it brings damnation and destruction as the result. ان شجرة الزقوم طعام الاثيم كالمهل يغلى في البطون كغلى الحميم 'Surely the tree of the Zaqqum is the food of the sinful, like dregs of oil; it shall boil in (their) bellies, like the boiling of hot water.' (xliv : 43, 46). and addressing the damned one it goes on to say : ذق انك انت العزيز الكريم 'Taste (the fruit of this tree, for) you forsooth are the mighty, the honourable.' (xliv : 49) The closing words are expressive of the wrath of God. They indicate that if the sinner had not been self-conceited or had not turned his back upon truth for the sake of his pretended honour and greatness he would not have had to taste that fruit and affliction. The last verse also suggests that the word *zaqqum* is made up of ذق (*zuq*) and ام (*um*), the former part meaning 'taste thou' and the latter being an abbreviation of the whole sentence انك انت العزيز الكريم, in which the first and last letters of the sentence are taken. Frequent

application has changed ذ into ز (both sounding like *z*).

In short, God has likened the words of faith uttered in this world to the trees of paradise and the words of faithlessness to *zaqqum*, the tree of hell, and has thus shown that a heavenly or a hellish life commences in this world. Relating to hell the Holy Qur'an also says : نار الله الموقدة التى تطلع على الافئدة 'It is the fire kindled by Allah, which rises above the hearts'. (civ : 6-7). This is an allusion to the fact that the grief, sorrow and affliction which overpower the heart really kindle the fire of hell ; for all spiritual tortures overtake the heart first and then consume the whole body. Again, we also read of hell-fire in the Holy Qur'an : وقودها الناس والحجارة 'The fuel of hell-fire (things which keep it constantly burning) are (two things) : (Firstly), the people [who, instead of the true God, worship other things or with whose consent other things are worshipped, as is elsewhere said : انكم وما تعبدون من دون الله حصب جهنم " Verily, you and your false gods who in spite of their being creatures asserted their Divinity shall be cast into hell", (xxi : 98)]. (Secondly),

the idols (for their existence has also called forth a hell'). (ii : 24). From these remarks it would appear that Heaven and Hell are not material worlds like this but that spiritual facts are their source and origin. This remark requires to be qualified in one way, *viz.*, that the blessings and tortures of the next world shall be the embodiments of the spiritual facts of this one but notwithstanding this, they shall not be things of this world.

Returning to the main point of the subject under discussion, the Holy Qur'an has taught us two means for a perfect spiritual union with God, *viz.*, complete resigation to the will of God, which is known by the name of *Islam*, and constant prayers and supplications as taught in the opening *sura* of Alquran known by the name of *fátiha*. The essence of the religious code of the Muslims is contained in '*Islam*' and the *fátiha*. These are the two channels which lead to the fountain of salvation and the only safe guides which lead us to God. These are the only means to attain the desired end of the highest spiritual advancement and ultimate union with God. They only can find God who realize the true signification of Islam by actually entering into it and who constantly pray as taught in

the *fátiha*. What is Islam ? It is the burning fire which consumes all low desires and, setting fire to the false gods, offers our life, property and honour as a sacrifice before God. Entering into this fountain we drink the water of a new life. The spiritual powers within us are united together as strongly as the links of a chain. A fire, resembling that of lightning, flashes out of us and a fire descends from above. These two flames coming into contact with each other consume all low motives and carnal desires and the love of others than God. A sort of death comes over the first life and this state is signified by the word *Islam*. Islam brings about death over the passions of the flesh and gives new life to us. This is the true regeneration, and the word of God must be revealed to the person who reaches this stage. This stage is termed the meeting of God, for it is then, that a man sees the face of God. His connection with God is so strong that he, as it were, sees God with his eyes. He is granted strength from above ; the internal faculties are all brightened and the magnetism of a pure heavenly life works strongly. Upon reaching this stage, God becomes his eye with which he sees, his tongue with which he speaks, his hand with which he

attacks, his ear with which he hears and his foot with which he walks. It is in reference to this stage that Almighty God says: يدالله فوق ايديهم 'The hand of Allah is above their hands' (xlviii. 10), and again: وما رميت اذ رميت ولكن الله رمى 'You did not smite when you smote (the enemy) but it was Allah Who smote' (viii : 17).

In short, this is the stage of the perfection of humanity and of its strong union with God. The will of God predominates over every desire, and the moral conditions, which were at first defenceless against the passions of the flesh, are fortified so as to be proof against every attack. With this holy transformation reason and understanding are also refined. It is to this condition that the verse وايدهم بروح منه (And He has strengthened with an inspiration from Him.) (lviii : 22), refers. The love of such a person for his Lord knows no bounds. To die for God and to suffer persecution or disgrace for His sake, however strange the expression might sound to other ears, are ordinary things for him. Being drawn he flies towards God, but does not know who attracts him. An invisible hand supports him under all conditions, and to fulfil the Will of

God becomes the principle and object of his life. He finds himself close to God as the Holy Qur'an says : نحن اقرب اليه من حبل الوريد 'We are nearer to him than his life-veins' (1 : 16). As no effort is required to pluck a ripened fruit from a plant, the low connections of such a man, in like manner, are severed of themselves. He has a deep connection with God and is removed far off from the creatures. He speaks with God and is spoken to by Him. To reach this stage the doors are as wide open now as they were in times past. The grace of God does not withhold this blessing from the earnest seekers now but vouchsafes it to them as bountifully as it did previously. But the vanities of the tongue do not lead to this way, and mere boasting or idle talk does not open this door. Many desire to attain it but there are very few who find it because it cannot be found without an earnest search and a true sacrifice. Sing *Io triumphe* as long as you will, it cannot avail. Difficult is the way and dangerous the path and you cannot walk in it as long as you do not set your foot with true sincerity upon the burning fire which others fly from. Boasting avails little when practically there is no zeal and earnestness. Read the verse of the Holy Qur'an which says :

و اذا سالك عبادي عني فاني قريب اجيب دعوة الداع اذا دعان فليستجيبولي و ليؤمنوبي لعلهم يرشدون 'And when My servants ask you concerning Me, then surely I am very near; I answer the prayer of the suppliant when he calls on Me, so they should answer My call and believe in Me that they may walk in the right way.' (ii : 186).

THE STATE OF MAN IN THE AFTER LIFE

'What is the teaching of the Holy Qur'an as to the state of man in his life after death,' is the next question which offers itself for solution. Briefly, the state after death is not altogether a new state; it is in fact a complete representation, a full and clear image, of our spiritual state in the present life. Here the good or bad conditions of the deeds or beliefs of a man are latent within him and their poison or panacea casts its influence upon him only secretly, but in the life to come they shall become manifest and clear as daylight. An idea of it, although a very imperfect one, may be had from the manner in which a person sees in a dream the embodiment of whatever is predominant in his temperament. When his temperament is prepared for a severe attack of fever, he may see in a dream flames of burning

fire, whereas he may find himself in flood of water when about to catch cold. In short, when the body is prepared for a particular disease, a dream may often disclose the embodiment of the conditions giving rise to it. From the manner in which internal conditions are represented in physical forms in dreams, we can form an idea of the embodiment of the spiritual conditions of this world in the life to come. After our earthly course is ended, we are translated to regions where our deeds and their consequences assume a shape, and what is hidden in us in this world is there unrolled and laid open before us. These embodiments of spiritual facts are substantial realities, as even in dreams, though the sight soon vanishes away, yet so long as it is before our eyes, it is taken to be a reality. As this representation by images is a new and a perfect manifestation of the power of God, we may as well call it, not a representation of certain facts, but actually a new creation brought about by the powerful hand of God. With reference to this point Almighty God says in the Holy Qur'an : فلا تعلم نفس ما اخفى لهم من قرة اعين 'So no soul knows what is in store for them of that which will refresh the eye,' (xxxii. 17), to be disclosed after death. Thus Almighty

God describes the heavenly blessings that the righteous shall enjoy in the next life as having been kept secret because, not being like anything contained in this world, no one knows aught about them. It is evident that the things of this world are not a secret to us; we not only know pomegranates, dates, milk, etc., but frequently taste of them. These things, therefore, could not be called secrets. The fruits of paradise have, therefore, nothing in common with these except the name. He is perfectly ignorant of the Holy Qur'an who takes paradise for a place where only the things of this world are provided in abundance. In explanation of the verse quoted above the Holy Prophet said that heaven and its blessings are things which 'the eye hath not seen, nor hath ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive of them.' But of the things of this world we cannot say that our eyes have not seen them, or that our ears have not heard them, or that our minds have not conceived them. When God and His Prophet tell us of things in heaven which our senses are not cognizant of in this world, we should be guilty of cherishing doctrines against the teachings of the Holy Qur'an if we supposed rivers flowing with the milk which we

ordinarily drink here. Can we, moreover, consistently with the idea of heaven, suppose flocks of cows and buffaloes reared in the paradisiac grounds and numerous honey-combs hanging on trees with countless bees busily engaged in collecting honey and hosts of angels engaged day and night in milking cows and getting honey and pouring them continuously into streams to keep them running on? Are these ideas in keeping with the teachings of the verses which tell us that this world is a stranger to the blessings of the next world? Will these things illumine the soul or increase the knowledge of God or afford spiritual food as the heavenly blessings are described to do? It is, no doubt, true that these blessings are represented as material things but we are also told that their source is spirituality and righteousness.

The following verse of the Holy Qur'an which may ordinarily be misunderstood is far from describing the heavenly blessings as being identical with the things of this world. The verse referred to here runs thus: وبشر الذين آمنو وعملوا الصالحات ان لهم جنات تجري من تحتها الانهار كلما رزقوا منها من ثمرة رزقاً قالو هذا الذي رزقنا من قبل واتوا به متشابها 'And convey good

news to those who believe and do good deed, that they shall have gardens in which rivers flow; when ever they shall be given a portion of the fruit thereof, they shall say: This is what was given to us before, and they shall be given the like of it.' (ii. 25). Now the context clearly shows that the fruits which the righteous are said to have tasted here do by no means mean the fruits of trees or the things of this world. The verse in fact tells us that those who believe and do good works prepare a paradise with their own hands for themselves, with their faith for trees and their good deeds for fruits. It is of the fruits of this garden that they are spiritually made to taste here and of the fruits of the same shall they eat in the next life; only that the spiritual fruits of this life shall be transformed into palpable and more delicious fruits in the next life. But as they shall have already tasted of them spiritually in this life, they shall be able to identify the fruits of that life with those of this and witnessing the close resemblance between the two, shall cry out: 'These are the fruits which were given us in the former life.' This verse, therefore, tells us in plain words that those who spiritually taste of the love of God in this world shall be physically sustained

by the same food in the next life. The blessings of the next life shall recall to their minds the spiritual blessings of the love of God which they tasted in this life, and they shall remember the time when in seclusion and at the dead of night, alone and in silence, they found their sweet enjoyment in the remembrance of God.

In short, the verse quoted above does not at all speak of the things of this world or of food which men used to eat here. If it be objected that the words of this verse contradict the saying of the Holy Prophet, already quoted, which describes the blessings of heavenly life as unseen by worldly eyes, unheard of by human ears and inconceivable by the mind of man, we say the contradiction exists only when we take the words: 'These are the fruits which were given us in our former life,' as indicating only temporal blessings enjoyable in this life by all men whether good or bad. But if the 'fruits' spoken of here be understood to mean the fruits of good works, the spiritual blessings which the good enjoy in this very life, there is no contradiction. Whatever the good men enjoy spiritually in this life are really blessings not of this but of the next life and are granted to them as a specimen of the bliss that is in store for

them in the next life in order to increase their yearning for it. It should, moreover, be borne in mind that the truly righteous man is not of this world and hence he is also hated by the world. He is of heaven and is granted heavenly blessings just as the worldly ones are granted the dainties of this world. The blessings which are granted him are really hidden from the eyes, the ears and the hearts of men of the world and they are quite strangers to them. But the person whose physical life is annihilated in the heavenly enjoyments is made spiritually to taste of the cup which he shall actually quaff in the next world and hence the truth of the words: 'These are the fruits which were given us formerly.' But he shall at the same time be perfectly aware that those blessings were quite unknown to the world, and as he too was *in* this world, though not of this world, so he also shall bear witness that his physical eye never saw such blessings, nor his ear ever heard of them, nor his mind ever conceived of them in the world. But in the second life (*i.e.*, after his regeneration) he had witnessed specimens of these things and this only at a time when all his lower connections having been cut asunder, higher ones were established with the next world.

The Holy Qur'an has described three important points in connection with the next life.

Firstly, it has repeatedly asserted that the life after death is not a new life but only an image and a manifestation of the present life. Thus it says: وكل انسان الزمناه طائره في عنقه ونخرج له يوم القيامة كتابا يلقاه منشورا 'And We have made every man's actions to cling to his neck, and We will bring forth to him on the resurrection day a book which he will find wide open' (xvii. 13) The word طائر used in this verse should be particularly noticed. *Táir* literally means a bird and is here used metaphorically to signify the actions of men; for every action, whether good or bad, takes flight like a bird. The bliss or burden which a person feels in the performance of an act vanishes away but it leaves its good or bad impression upon the heart. The Holy Qur'an has disclosed the important principle that every deed makes a mysterious impression upon the heart. Every action of a man is, in fact, followed by an action of God which imprints its good or bad effect not only upon the heart but also upon the hands, the feet, the ears, the eyes, etc., of the doer. This book which records every action, and, hidden from the human eye, is being

prepared in this life shall show itself clearly in the next. Referring to the heavenly life, the Holy Word says elsewhere: يوم ترى المومنين والمومنات يسعى نورهم بين ايديهم وبايمانهم 'On that day you will see the faithful men and the faithful women—their light running before them on their right hand.' (lvii. 12). With regard to the wicked, the Holy Book says: الهكم التكاثر حتى زرتم المقابر كلاسوف تعلمون ثم كلا سوف تعلمون كلا لو تعلمون علم اليقين لترون الجحيم ثم لترونها عين اليقين ثم لتسئلن يومئذ عن النعيم 'Abundance diverts you, until you come to the graves. Nay! you shall soon know, nay! nay! you shall soon know. Nay! if you had known with a certain knowledge, you should most certainly have seen the hell; then you shall most certainly see it with the eye of certainty; then on that day you shall most certainly be questioned about the boons' (cii: 1-8). These verses leave no doubt as to the fact of the commencement of a hellish life in this very world. The hell of the next life is prepared in this, hidden from the human eye, but can be recognized with the knowledge of certainty by those who bestow consideration upon it. Almighty God has here described there

stages of certainty, viz., علم اليقين or certainty by inference, or حق اليقين certainty by sight, and عين اليقين or certainty by realization. A homely illustration would perhaps make the subject easily comprehensible. If a person sees a column of smoke from a distance he readily concludes the existence of fire there as nothing else can give rise to smoke. He thus obtains a certainty by inference with regard to the presence of fire, which is called the knowledge of certainty in the verses quoted above. But if he walks on to the place from which the smoke rises and actually sees the flames, he obtains a knowledge with the eye of certainty, which is certainty by sight. To realize the truth of certainty, he must thrust his hand into it and the certainty, he thus attains to, is certainty by realization. These are also the three states of human knowledge with regard to hell. The knowledge of certainty can be had in this world by those who will, but in the interval between death and resurrection a man sees hell with the eye of certainty, while at the day of resurrection he shall realize the truth of the certainty by himself entering into hell.

It should also be borne in mind that the Holy Qur'an describes three worlds or three

different states of man's life. The first world is the present one which is called the world of earning and of the first creation. It is here that man earns a reward for the good or bad deeds he does. Although there are stages of advancement for the good after resurrection yet that advancement is granted simply by the grace of God and does not depend upon human efforts.

The second world is called برزخ *barzakh.* The word originally means any intermediate state. As this world falls between the present life and resurrection, it has been called برزخ. But this word has from times immemorial been applied to an intermediate state and thus the word itself is a standing witness to the intermediate state between death and after life. We have shown in the *Minan-ur-Rahman* that the words of the Arabic language are the words of the mouth of God and that it is the only language which can claim to be Divine, the fountain from which all sorts of knowledge flow, the mother of all languages and the first as well as the last medium of Divine revelation. It is the first because Arabic was the Word of God which had been with God and had at last been revealed to the world, from which men learned

to make their own languages, and the last because the last Divine Book, i.e., the Holy Qur'an, is also in Arabic. برزخ is a word of Arabic origin and is a compound of بر and زخ and literally means that 'the period of earning merit or demerit by deeds is over.' The state of *Barzakh* is that in which the soul leaves the mortal body and the perishable remains are decomposed. The body is thrown into a pit and the soul also is, as it were, thrown down into some pit as is indicated by the word برزخ, because it loses the power to do good or bad deeds along with its loss of control over the body. It is evident that a good state of the soul is dependent upon the soundness of the body. A shock communicated to a particular point of the brain causes a loss of memory while an injury to another part is certain to deal a death-blow to the reasoning faculty and may destroy even consciousness. Similarly a convulsion of the brain muscles or a hemorrhage or morbidity of the brain may, by causing obstruction, lead to insensibility, epilepsy or cerebral apoplexy. Experience, therefore, establishes the fact beyond all reasonable doubt that with all its connections severed from the body the soul can

serve no purpose. It is simply idle to assert that the human soul can, at any time, enjoy a bliss without having any connection with a body. It may please us as an interesting tale but reason and experience lend no support to it. We can hardly imagine the soul to be in a perfect condition when all its connections with the body are cut off, in face of our daily experience that the slightest derangement of the physical system interrupts the functions of the soul as well. Do we not ordinarily witness that a sound state of the soul depends upon a sound state of the body. When a person becomes decrepit with old age the soul also is enfeebled and age steals away the whole store of its knowledge. The Holy Word says referring to the decrepitude of old age: لكيلا يعلم من بعد علم شيئًا ('A man lives to such an old age) so that after having knowledge, he does not know anything.' (xxii : 5). These observations will be sufficient to demonstrate that the soul is nothing unless it has its connection with a body. Had it any value apart from the body, the action of an All-wise Being in uniting the soul with a short lived body would have been quite meaningless. Moreover man is essentially a progressive animal and the advancement, which he aims at, is by no

means a limited one. Now if the soul is unable to make any advancement in this brief life without the assistance of the body, how could it, without a body, attain to the higher stages of advancement in the next life?

In short, various arguments prove conclusively that according to the Islamic principles, the perfection of the soul depends upon its permanent connection with a body. There is no doubt that after death this body of clay is severed from the soul but then in the *Barzakh* every soul receives temporarily a new body to be in a position to taste of the reward or punishment of its deeds. This new body is not a body of clay but a bright or a dark body prepared from the actions of this life. Such is the Qur'anic description of the body in the *Barzakh*, viz., that the soul has a new body which is bright or dark according to the good or bad actions which a man performs. It may appear as a mystery to some but this much at least must be admitted that it is not unreasonable. The perfect man realizes the preparation of such a bright body even in this life. Ordinary human understanding may call it a mystery which is beyond human comprehension but those who have a keen and bright spiritual sight will

have no difficulty in realizing the truth of a bright or a dark body after death prepared from actions in this life. In short, the new body granted in the *Barzakh* becomes the means of the reward of good or evil. I have personal experience in this matter. Many a time, when fully awake, I have seen visions in which I saw those who were dead. I have seen many an evil-doer and a wicked person with a body quite dark and smoky. I have personal acquaintance with these matters and I assert it forcibly that, as Almighty God has said, every one is granted a body either transparent or dark. It is not necessary that unaided reason should be able to look into these mysteries. The eye sees things but it is vain to expect it to serve as an organ of taste. Similarly the muscles of the tongue may be used for tasting things but as organs of sight they are simply useless. In like manner, the deep secrets of the other world, upon which light is thrown only by visions, cannot be discovered by the help of reason. Almighty God has established certain laws in this world and particular means for the knowledge of particular things. To know a thing, therefore, we must seek first the proper means and then we are sure to discover the thing itself.

It must also be remembered in connection with this point that the Word of God has described those who walk in error and wickedness as dead and lifeless while the good it calls living. The secret of it is that the means of the life of those who are ignorant of God, being simply eating, drinking or indulgence in their bestial passions, are cut off along with their death. Of spiritual food they have no share and therefore their resurrection will only be for their punishment. It is an allusion to this secret that Almighty God says: انه من يات ربه مجرما فان له جهنم لا يموت فيها و لا يحيى 'Whoever comes to his Lord (being) guilty, for him is surely hell; he shall not die therein, nor shall he live'. (xx : 74). But the beloved ones of God do not die with their physical death for they have their means of sustenance with them.

The third world is the world of resurrection. In this world every soul, good or bad, virtuous or wicked, shall be given a visible body. The day of resurrection is the day of the complete manifestation of God's glory when every one shall become perfectly aware of the existence of God. On that day every person shall have complete and open reward of his actions. How

this can be brought about is not a matter to wonder at for God is All-powerful and nothing is impossible with Him. Thus He says Himself in the Holy Qur'an : اولم ير الانسان انا خلقناه
من نطفة فاذا هو خصيم مبين و ضرب لنا مثلا و
نسى خلقه قال من يحيى العظام و هى رميم
قل يحييها الذى انشا ها اول مرة و هو بكل
خلق عليم...اوليس الذى خلق السموات و الارض
بقادر على ان يخلق مثلهم بلى و هو الخلاق
العليم انما امره اذا اراد شيئا ان يقول له كن
فيكون فسبحان الذى بيده ملكوت كل شئ
و اليه ترجعون. 'Does not man see that We have created him from the small life-germ? Then lo! he is an open disputant. And he strikes out a likeness for Us and forgets his own creation. Says he : Who will give life to the bones when they are rotten? Say : He will give life to them Who brought them into existence at first, and He is cognizant of all creation, ... Is not He Who created the heavens and the earth able to create the like of them? Yea! and He is the Creator (of all), the Knower. His Command when He intends anything is only to say it, Be, so it is. Therefore glory be to Him in Whose hands is the kingdom of all things, and to Him you shall be brought back.' (xxxvi : 77—83). In these verses

Almighty God tells us that with Him nothing is impossible, for when He could create man out of an insignificant thing at first He cannot be regarded as destitute of power in bringing him to life a second time.

Before proceeding further, it is necessary to deal with an objection here. It might be objected that when a long period of time must elapse before the world of resurrection is brought into existence, the *Barzakh*, where the souls of both good and bad men must remain in the meanwhile, is no better than a useless lock-up for souls. But the objection is based simply upon ignorance, for the *Barzakh* is as well a place of reward for good and evil as the resurrection itself. The Word of God describes *Barzakh* as a place where punishment and reward shall be given though not so openly as after the resurrection. The Holy Qur'an abounds with verses relating that a man meets with his due immediately after his death. Thus speaking of a certain person it says: قيل ادخل الجنة . 'It was said (to him): Enter the garden.' (xxxvi. 26), and of another it says: فرآه في سواء الجحيم 'And saw him in the midst of hell' (xxxvii; 55) i. e., a good man had an unbelieving friend in this life and

when they both died, the good man anxious to know the state of his friend was shown that he was in the midst of hell. Punishment and reward are thus bestowed immediately after death, and those whose proper place is hell are brought to hell while those who deserve paradise are brought to paradise. But the day of resurrection is the day of the manifestation of the highest glory of God which His transcendent wisdom has ordained should at last be brought about. God created man that He might be recognized as a Creator; He will destroy all that He may be recognized as the Vanquisher of all; and, last of all, He shall give a perfect life to all and assemble them that He may be recognized as the All-powerful Being.

The second point of importance which the Holy Qur'an has described with reference to the life to come is that the spiritual facts of this life shall be represented in the next (whether *Barzakh* or Resurrection) as embodiments. A few of the verses bearing upon this subject are the following: من كان في هذه اعمى فهو في الاخرة اعمى و اضل سبيلا 'Whoever is blind in this, he shall (also) be blind in the hereafter, and more erring from the way.' (xvii ; 72). In

other words, the spiritual blindness of this world shall become apparent and shall be seen as actual blindness in the next. خذوه فغلوه ثم الجحيم صلوه ثم في سلسلة ذرعها سبعون ذراعا فاسلكوه 'Lay hold on him, then put a chain on him, then cast him into the burning fire, then thrust him into a chain the length of which is seventy cubits.' (lxix; 30-32). It should be noted that the spiritual torture of this world has been represented as a physical punishment in the next in these verses. The chain to be put into the neck, for instance, represents the desires of this world which keep a man with his head bent upon the earth, and it is these desires that shall assume the shape of a chain. Similarly the entanglements of this world shall be seen as chains on the feet. The heart-burning of this world shall likewise be clearly seen as flames of burning fire. The wicked one has, in fact, in this very world within himself a hell of the passions and inextinguishable desires of this world and feels the burning of that hell in the failures he meets with. When, therefore, he shall be cast farther off from his temporal desires and shall see an everlasting despair before him, his heart-burning and bitter sighs for his dear desires shall assume the shape of burning fire.

The Holy Qur'an says: وحيل بينهم و بين ما يشتهون 'And a barrier shall be placed between them and that which they desire, (and this shall be the beginning of their torture).' (xxxiv. 54).

The thrusting into a chain of the length of seventy cubits reveals the same deep secret. The limit of age may, as a general rule, be fixed at seventy and a wicked person often lives up to that age in his wickedness. He would sometimes even enjoy seventy years excluding the periods of childhood and decrepitude. These seventy years during which he could work with honesty, wisdom and zeal, he wastes away only in the entanglements of the world and in following his own sensual passions. He does not try to free himself from the chain of desires, and therefore in the next world the chain of the desires which he indulged in for seventy years shall be embodied into a chain of seventy cubits length, every cubit representing a year, in which the wicked one shall be fettered. It should, therefore, be remembered that the punishment which overtakes a man is one prepared by his own hands, and his own evil deeds become the source of his torture. This law is elsewhere expressed in the Holy Qur'an in the following

words: انطلقوا الى ظل ذى ثلث شعب لا ظليل ولا يغني من اللهب 'O ye wicked ones! Walk on to the covering having three branches, neither having the coolness of the shade nor availing against the flame'. (lxxvii; 30, 31). The three branches spoken of here represent bestiality, savageness and infatuation which remaining unmodified lead to transgressions and evil deeds. These three shall appear on the day of judgment as three branches without any leaves and therefore availing nothing against heat.

To declare the same law Almighty God says of those who are in paradise: يوم ترى المومنين و المومنات يسعى نورهم بين ايديهم و بايمانهم ' On that day you will seethe faithful men and the faithful women—their light running before them and on their right hand'. (lvii; 12). In another verse He says: يوم تبيض وجوه و تسود وجوه 'On the day when (some) faces shall turn white and (some) faces shall tnrn black'. (iii. 105). And again: مثل الجنة التى وعد المتقون فيها انهار من ماء غير اسن و انهار من لبن لم يتغير طعمه و انهار من خمر لذة للشاربين و انهار من عسل مصفى 'A Parable of the garden which those guarding (against evil)

are promised; therein are rivers of water that does not alter, and rivers of milk the taste whereof does not change, and rivers of wine delicious to thóse who drink, and rivers of honey clarified'. (xlvii; 15). From this verse it appears clearly that the promised paradise is only a representation of boundless oceans of all these things. The water of life which the righteous man drinks spiritually in this world shall there appear manifestly as a river, the spiritual milk with which he is here spiritually nourished like a child shall there manifest itself as a river of milk, the spiritual wine of the love of God with which he remains in a blissful state in this world shall assume the shape of a river flowing with wine, and the honey of the sweetness of faith which he spiritually tastes here shall flow in paradise in palpable rivers. The spiritual state of every person shall on that day become visible to all in his gardens and rivers, and God also shall reveal Himself to the righteous in His full glory on that day. In short, the spiritual states shall no more remain hidden but shall show themselves palpably.

The third point of importance that the Holy Qur'an has described in connection with the life after death is that the progress that can be

made in that world is infinite. The word of God says : والذين آمنوا معه نورهم يسعى بين ايديهم وبايمانهم يقولون ربنا اتمم لنا نورنا واغفرلنا انك على كل شيء قدير 'And those who believe with him; their light shall run on before them and on their right hands; they shall say: Our Lord! make perfect for us our light, and grant us protection : surely Thou hast power over all things'. (lxvi; 8). This unceasing desire for perfection shows clearly that progress in paradise shall be endless. For when they shall have attained one excellence they shall not stop there, and seeing a higher stage of excellence shall consider that to which they shall have attained as imperfect and shall, therefore, desire the attainment of the higher excellence. When they shall have attained to this they shall yet see another higher excellence, and thus they shall continue to pray for the attainment of higher and higher excellences. This ceaseless desire for perfection shows that they shall be endlessly attaining to excellences.

In short the righteous shall go on making progress and shall never recede a step nor shall they ever be deprived of those blessings. The question may arise here as to the seeking of

مغفرة (*maghfirat*) after an entry into paradise and obtaining God's pardon. Such a question is, however, simply based upon an ignorance of the actual meaning of مغفرة (*maghfirat*) and استغفار (*istighfar*). *Maghfirat* really means a suppression of a defective state. The righteous shall be continually praying to God for the attainment of perfection and complete immersion in light. They shall be ever ascending upwards and shall regard every state as defective in comparison with a higher one to which they shall aspire and shall, therefore, pray God to suppress the defective state that they may be able to get to the higher. Their desire for *maghfirat* or a suppression of the defective states shall therefore be endless becaue the progress which they shall have to make shall also be endless. We can clearly see from this verse the true signification of the word *istighfar*, and also that the desire of *istighfar* is really the pride of man because it is the only thing which leads him on to the highest excellences which a man can possess. The person who, being born of a woman, does not constantly recur to *istighfar* is not a man but a worm. He is blind and does not see and has an impure heart.

In short heaven and hell, according to the

Holy Qur'an, are images and representations of a man's own spiritual life in this world. They are not new material worlds which come from outside. It is true that they shall be visible and palpable, call them material if you please but they are only embodiments of the spiritual facts of this world. We call them material not in the sense that there shall be trees planted in the paradisiacal fields just like those that are planted here below and that there shall be brimstones and sulphur in hell but in the sense that we shall there find the embodiments of the spiritual facts of this life. Heaven and hell, according to Muslim belief, are the images of the actions which we perform here below.

THE OBJECT OF MAN'S LIFE IN THIS WORLD AND THE MEANS OF ITS ATTAINMENT

The third question set by the Conference relates to the objects of man's life here below and the means by which those objects may be attained. It is needless to say that different men have, on account of their superficial views or narrow-mindedness, set before themselves different objects generally limited to a gratification of the low desires and pleasures of this world. But Almighty God has in His Holy Word declared a higher aim of man's existence.

Thus the Holy Qur'an says: و ما خلقت الجن و الانس الا ليعبدون 'I have not created the *ginn* and the men except that they should serve Me (and worship Me)' (li: 56). The real object of man's life according to the Holy Qu'ran is, therefore, only a true knowledge and worship of God and a total resignation to His will so that whatever is said or done, is said or done for His sake only. One thing, at least, is plain and that is that man has no choice in the matter of fixing the aim of his life. He does not enter the world or leave it as he desires. He is a creature and the Creator Who has brought him into existence and bestowed upon him higher and more excellent faculties than upon other animals has also assigned an object to his existence. A man may or may not understand it or a hundred different motives may hold him back from it, but the truth is that the grand aim of man's life consists in knowing and worshipping God and living for His sake. Almighty God says in the Holy Qur'an: ان الدين عند الله الاسلام 'Surely the true religion with Allah is Islam, (iii. 18). And again فطرة الله التى فطر الناس عليها......ذلك الدين القيم 'The nature made by Allah in which He has made men;......that

is the right religion' (xxx. 30), i.e.; He has willed it that man should devote his faculties to the love, obedience and worship of God. It is for this reason that Almighty God has granted him faculties which are suited for Islam.

We cannot enter into a detailed commentary of these verses here. Something has already been said in answer to the third part of the first question in connection with this point. We may here add a few remarks upon the wonderful aptitude of the faculties of man for Islam. The external and internal endowments of human nature give us clearly to understand that the highest object of their creation is the love and worship of God. True happiness, which is generally admitted to be the goal of life, is not attainable through the diverse pursuits which men follow but only through God. Not all the felicities which this world can bestow can afford a relief from the gnawing grief which attends a man's last moments upon this earth. The richest millionaire, the highest official, the most successful merchant, the greatest king or the wisest philosopher does not possess contentment of mind and departs from this world a prey to poignant regret. His heart upbraids him for his absorption in worldly cares and his

conscience judges him guilty of the employment of deceit and unfair means to attain success in his worldly affairs.

Take the question in another light. In the case of the lower animals, we see that their faculties are so made as to render them unable to serve a higher purpose than a particular one and they cannot go beyond a certain limit. This leads us to the conclusion that the highest limit which the faculties of a particular animal can reach is also the highest aim of its creation. A bullock, for instance, may be used to furrow the ground or draw water or for loading but with its present faculties it can serve no higher purpose. This is, therefore also the aim of its existence. Judging man in the same manner we find that of all the faculties which nature has bestowed upon him the highest is that which awakens him to a search after God and encourages him to the noble aspiration of losing his own self in the love of God and completely submitting himself to His will. In the requirements of his physical nature the lower animals are on a level with him. In art some animals display more skill than human beings. Even the bee produces honey from the juice of flowers with such an exquisite skill that man has failed with

all his genius to show anything like it. The perfection of man, therefore, does not consist in these matters but in something else. It consists in the excellence of his spirituality, in his union with God. The true object of his life in this world is, therefore, that the window of his heart should be opened towards God.

We are now in a position to anwser the second part of the question, viz., how can this object be attained?

The first means to attain to this end is that in the recognition of God a man should tread upon the right path and have his faith in the true and living God. The goal can never be reached by the man who takes the first step in the wrong direction and looks upon some stone or creature or an element of natures as his Deity. The true God assists those who seek Him but a dead deity cannot assist its dead worshippers. Almighty God has well illustrated this in a parable: له دعوة الحق و الذين يدعون من دونه لا يستجيبون لهم بشيء الا كباسط كفيه الى الماء ليبلغ فاه و ما هو ببالغه و ما دعاء الكافرين الا في ضلال 'To Him is due the true prayer; and those whom they pray to besides Allah give them no answer, but (they are) like one who stretches forth his two hands towards

water that it may reach his mouth, but it will not reach it; and the prayer of the unbelievers is only in error'. (xiii ; 14).

The second means to attain the true object of life consists in being informed of the perfect beauty which the Divine Being possesses. Beauty naturally attracts the heart and incites love. The beauty of God consists in His unity, His majesty, His grandeur and His other lofty attributes. The Holy Qur'an draws attention to this point in the following well-known verses: قل هو الله احد الله الصمد لم يلد و لم يولد و لم يكن له كفوا احد 'Say: He, Allah, is One. Allah is He on Whom all depend. He begets not, nor is He begotten: And none is like Him.' (cxii : 1-4). The Holy Qur'an teems with verses declaring the omnipotence, majesty and glory of God. It presents a God who attracts the heart on account of His beauty and majesty and rejects the dead, weak, unmerciful and powerless gods of false religions

The third means of reaching the goal consists in realizing the great goodness of God. Beauty and goodness are the only two incentives to love. The attributes of God relating to goodness are described in the *Fátiha.* The Sura runs thus: الحمد لله رب العالمين

الرحمن الرحيم مالك يوم الدين ' (All) praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the worlds. The Beneficent, the Merciful, Master of the day of requital.' (i : 1-3). It is plain that the Divine goodness could not be perfect unless He first brought everything into existence from nothing and then gave it sustenance under all circumstances and Himself supported it in its weakness. All kinds of His mercies should also have been brought into existence for His creatures and His goodness should not have had any limits set to it. To this perfect goodness, the Holy Qur'an has again and again drawn attention. Thus it says in one place : وان تعدوا نعمة الله لا تحصوها 'And if you (try to) count Allah's favours, you will not be able to number them.' (xiv. 34).

The fourth means for the desired end is prayer. The Holy Qur'an says : ادعوني استجب لكم 'Call upon Me, I will answer you.' (xl ; 60). Frequent stress has been laid upon this point in the Holy Qur'an because man can reach God only with the assistance of God.

The fifth is مجاهدة (*majáhida*), i.e., to seek God by spending one's riches, exerting one's whole power, sacrificing one's life and applying

one's wisdom in the way of God. The Holy Qur'an says: و جاهدوا باموالكم و انفسكم 'And strive hard in Allah's way with your property and your persons' (ix ; 41) again مما رزقنا هم ينفقون (' Only they are successful who) spend out of what We have given them, (wisdom, knowledge, understanding, art, etc.)' (ii ; 3) and again و الذين جاهدوا فينا لنهدينهم سبلنا 'And (as for) those who strive hard for Us, We will most certainly guide them in Our ways.' (xxix ; 69).

The sixth means by which a person may safely attain to the goal is perseverance, i e., he should be indefatigable and untiring in the way in which he walks and unswerving under the hardest trials. As Almighty God says: ان الذين قالوا ربنا الله ثم استقاموا تتنزل عليهم الملائكة الا تخافوا و لا تحزنوا وابشروا بالجنة التى كنتم توعدون نحن اولياؤكم في الحيوة الدنيا و في الاخرة '(As for) those who say, Our Lord is Allah, then continue in the right way, the angels descend upon them; Saying · Fear not, nor be grieved, and receive good news of the garden which you were promised. We are your guardians in this

world's life and in the hereafter.' (xli; 30, 31). In these verses we are informed that perseverance in faith brings about the pleasure of God. It is true that, as the proverb goes: 'Perseverance is more than a miracle.' The highest degree of perseverance is called forth when adversities encompass a man all around, when he is threatened with the loss of life, property and honour in the path of God and whatever is consoling or comforting forsakes him, so much so that even God tries him by closing the door of encouraging dreams, visions and revelations for a time, it is when a man is surrounded by these dreary sights and the last beam of hope passes away that perseverance must be shown. Under such ills and sufferings a man must show firmness, not swerve from the line, hold on through fire and water, be willing to suffer every disgrace, wait for no help or support, not even seek any good tidings from Almighty God, and in spite of his helplessness and the absence of all comforting elements he must stand up firmly, submitting himself, sink or swim, to the heavenly will without wringing his hands or beating his breast. This is the true perseverance which reveals the glorious face of God. It is this noble quality which the dust of the apostles,

prophets, the righteous and the faithful still exhales. Referring to this Almighty God directs the believers to pray to Him in the following words : اهدنا الصراط المستقيم صراط الذين انعمت عليهم 'Guide us on the right path, the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours.' (i ; 5, 6) and again : ربنا افرغ علينا صبرا و توفنا مسلمين 'Our Lord! Pour out upon us patience and cause us to die in submission.' (vii ; 126).

It should be borne in mind that in afflictions and trials Almighty God causes a light to descend upon the hearts of His faithful servants strengthened with which they meet the afflictions with calmness and quiet, and on account of the sweetness of their faith kiss the chains they are bound with for walking in the path of God. When the righteous servants of God are under hard trials and sufferings and see death face to face, they do not contend with their Lord to remove their sufferings. They know that to pray to God to pass away the cup of their hard lot is opposing His will and not in accordance with a total resignation to it. The true lover does not recede but takes a forward step when he sees ills and adversities, and

looking upon his own life as a very insignificant thing willingly submits himself to the will of heaven and is prepared to meet the worst. Of such people Almighty God says: و من ا لنا س من يشري نفسه ا بتغاء مرضات ا لله و ا لله رؤف بالعباد 'And among men is he who sells himself to seek the pleasure of Allah; and Allah is affectionate to the servants' (ii; 207). In short this is the essence of the constancy which leads to God.

The seventh means to attain the object is the company of the righteous and the imitation of their perfect models. It is really one of the greatest needs of the appearance of the prophets. Man is naturally inclined to imitate a model and feels the need of it. A perfect model infuses life into a man and invigorates him to act upon the principles of righteousness, while he who does not imitate a perfect model gradually loses all eagerness to do good and ultimately falls into error. To this end the Holy Qur'an says: كونوا مع ا لصا د قين 'Be with the true ones', (ix; 119) and again صرا ط ا لذين ا نعمت عليهم 'The path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours' (i; 6).

The eighth means is pure dreams, visions and revelations from God. As the road which leads to God is a secret and mysterious road and is full of difficulties and dangers, the spiritual wayfarer may, therefore, depart from the right course or despair of attaining the goal. The grace of God, therefore, continues to encourage and strengthen him in his spiritual journey with inspiring visions and revelations, gives him consolation in hours of grief and animates him with a still more zealous desire to pursue his journey eagerly. Such is the Divine law with the wayfarers of His path that He continues to cheer their hearts every now and then with His Word and to reveal to them that He is with them. Thus strengthened they take this journey with great vigour. Thus He says in the Holy Qur'an : لهم البشري في الحيوة الدنيا و في الاخرة 'They shall have good news in this world's life and in the hereafter'. (x ; 64). The Holy Qur'an has described numerous other ways which assist us in reaching the goal of life but we cannot describe them here for want of space.

THE ACTION OF THE PRACTICAL ORDINANCES OF LAW IN THIS AND THE AFTER LIFE

How does a true and perfect Law revealed

from God practically operate upon the heart of man is the fourth question which I shall briefly consider. This question has already been partly answered in dealing with the first question. A perfect Divine Law enables a man to rise from the deepest depths of ignorance to the highest pinnacles of light and knowledge; it turns the savage into a man, the man into a highly moral being, and last of all transforms his morality into spirituality and godliness. The injunctions of the Law have, moreover, the effect of regulating a man's relations with his fellow-beings and of increasing his sympathy for them. By its aid he begins gradually to see and know their rights and in his dealings with them applies his attributes of justice, goodness, and sympathy on the proper occasion. He freely gives to each, according to his desert, a share of his knowledge, property, comforts, and other blessings which God has granted him. Like the sun he sheds his lustre over all and like the moon transmits to others the light which he borrows from the great and original source of light. He brightens like the day and shows the ways of truth and virtue and again like the night he draws the veil over others' faults and misdeeds and affords rest to the tired

and weary. Like the heaven he takes every distressed one under his shelter and fertilizes the lifeless earth with salubrious rain, and like the earth he submits himself in all humility and lowliness to be trampled under others' feet as a trial for them and furnishes them with various spiritual fruits. The effect of walking in obedience to the ordinances of a perfect law is, therefore, that a man is able to perform his duty towards God and his duty towards man in a fitting and creditable manner. He is totally resigned to the will of God and completely engaged in the service of humanity. Such is the transformation which obedience to the Law brings about in a man in this life. In the next life the spiritual union with God shall find a clearer manifestation in the sight of God and the service of God's creatures which one has done simply out of His love and to which faith and the desire of good deeds are the only incentives, shall be symbolised into the trees the and rivers of paradise. Almighty God says in Holy Qur'an:
والشمس وضحها والقمر اذا تلها والنهار (ch. xci)
اذا جلها والیل اذا یغشها والسماء وما بنها
والارض وما طحها ونفس وما سوها فالهمها
فجورها وتقوها قد افلح من زکها وقد خاب
من دسها کذبت ثمود بطغوها اذا نبعث اشقها

فقال لهم رسول الله ناقة الله و سقيها فكذبوه
فعقروها فدمدم عليهم ربهم بذنبهم فسوها و لا
يخاف عقبها 'Consider the sun and his light, and the moon when she borrows light from him, and the day when it exposes it to view, and the night when it draws a veil over it, and the heaven and its make, and the earth and its extension, and the soul and its perfection, (i.e., all the excellences which exist separately in each of these things are possessed combinedly and completely by the soul of a perfect man, and as they are all separately engaged in the service of mankind the perfect man alone performs all that service); so He intimated to it by inspiration its deviating from truth and its guarding (against evil); he will indeed be successful who purifies it, and he will indeed fail who corrupts it. Samood gave the lie (to the truth) in their inordinacy, when the most unfortunate of them broke forth with mischief, so Allah's apostle said to them; (Leave alone) Allah's she-camel, and (give) her (to) drink. But they called him a liar and slaughtered her, therefore their Lord crushed them for their sin and levelled them (with the ground). And He fears not its consequence' (xci; 1—15), i.e., who, in complete submission to the will

of God, is engaged in the service of man like the sun, moon, etc. The promise of being saved from death is in illusion to the eternal life which shall be granted to the perfect one hereafter. This shows that a virtuous course of life in obedience to the commandments of the Law leads to eternal life hereafter for which the sight of God shall serve as a sustenance. The *Sura* then goes on to say: 'He is undone and must despair of his life who has corrupted his soul (and departs from this world having led an impure life and without having attained the excellences for which God had granted him faculties)', and adds by way of illustration: 'The fate of that wretch shall be the same as that of *Samūd* who hamstrung the camel which was called the "Camel of God" and did not allow her to drink from their fountain.' The wretch who does not purify his soul really wounds the camel of God and deprives her of the water of his fountain. This alludes to the fact that the spirit of man is the camel of God which he rides upon, i.e., the heart of man is the throne of the manifestation of God's glories and the water which is the source of the life of that camel is the love and knowledge of God. As to the consequences of

Samūd's rejection, we are told that 'when they wounded the camel and hindered her from drinking, they were destroyed and God did not even care for their young and their widows.' Such is the fate of every person who hurts the camel of his spirit, does not care for its perfection and withholds it from the water of life, viz., that he too shall be destroyed.

God's swearing by His creatures is a method adopted by the Holy Qur'an at which the opponents of Islam have too often stumbled but their objections are based simply upon ignorance. The oaths of the Holy Qur'an have underlying them secrets of a very deep nature which the hostile critics, being unable to comprehend on account of their being destitute of bright heavenly wisdom, have taken for a flaw. In order to comprehend this subject fully, we must consider the meaning and object of swearing. In ordinary transactions or legal proceedings when a person takes an oath, his object is simply to supply the deficiency of insufficient testimony. He really calls God to witness when there is no other witness in the case; for God is the knower of secrets and the best witness in every case. The manner in which he intends God to bear testimony is by His action, viz., that the truth

of his assertion shall be confirmed if God does not send down His punishment upon him after the oath as a mark of His displeasure which must follow a false oath. It is for this reason too that a man is forbidden to swear by the name of any creature, for the latter has not the power either to know the secrets of men or to punish them upon a false oath. The object and meaning of God's oaths must, however, be distinguished from those of mortals. Divine laws reveal a two-fold nature of the works of God viz, obvious and inferential. The former are easily comprehensible and regarding them very few or no differences exist; but in the comprehension of the latter there is a liability of error and much difference of opinion. In the form of oaths Almighty God has called attention to what may be inferred from what is obvious. To take the oaths mentioned in the verses quoted above, we see that the sun and the moon day and night, heaven and earth, belong to the former class and their properties as referred to in those verses are known to all. But the same properties as found in the spirit of man are not obvious. To lead to an inference of the existence of those properties in the spirit of man Almighty God has, therefore, called to wintess

His obvious works. The brief oaths may, therefore, be unfolded into a chain of reasoning. The hidden excellences possessed by the spirit of man are inferred from the manifest working of the sun and the moon, etc. Man is but a miniature world and in his spirit is represented on a small scale all that exists in the outward world. By creating man God has, as it were, enclosed in a nutshell the various forces existing in the world. Now it is plain that the great bodies of the universe, for instance, have certain properties and forces which they employ in the service of God's creatures. It is, therefore, contrary to all reason to assert that man who is above them all and greater than all of them should be destitute of benefiting the creation like them. Like the sun he possesses a light, the light of wisdom and knowledge, with which he can enlighten the whole world. Like the moon he borrows a light from the most High, the original source of light, the light of vision, inspiration and revelation, which he transmits to those who are yet in the dark and have not attained to the perfection of humanity. What is it but sheer ignorance then to assert that prophetship is a falsehood and that a message from on high, Divine law and heavenly books are

only impostures to gain some private ends. Consider again how day-light renders manifest every path and reveals its ups and downs. The perfect man is the day of spiritual light. His appearance brings the different paths into view and points out the right from the wrong, for he is the bright day of truth and virtue. We observe in like manner how the night affords rest to the tired and the weary. The over-spent labourer of the day welcomes the night and goes to rest relieved of the day's toils. Night, moreover, casts a veil over faults and thus saves a person from disgraceful exposure. The perfect man, in like manner, comes to give rest to the world and to lighten the burden of men. With his revelations and inspirations from the Source of Wisdom and knowledge he pours balm into the souls of all wise men. Great truths which the wise men alone could not have discovered with the sweat of their brow are disclosed with ease through the inspired one's agency. Revelation, moreover, assists reason and hides its faults for it conceals its failings from the world. The wise man reforms himself and corrects his errors by the guidance and light of revelation and thus with its aid he saves himself from public exposure. This is the reason why a Greek philosopher,

Plato, committed himself to the disgraceful and foolish act of making an offering to an idol while no such act is recorded of any Muslim philosopher because the latter had the perfect revelation of the Holy Prophet for guidance of reason. It is evident from this why God has called attention to the covering of night in the form of an oath.

It is moreover clear that the perfect servants of God take every distressed and fatigued person under their shelter like heaven. The prophets of God especially benefit the world with the showers of their blessings and favours as heaven does with the showers of rain. They likewise possess the property of the earth, and from their purified souls various sorts of the trees of knowledge and truth grow up in abundance, and with their shelter, flowers and fruits they bless the world. Thus the laws which we read in the open book of nature are a witness to the hidden laws and their testimony has been described in the form of oaths in the verses quoted above. How excellent is the wisdom displayed in the Word of God. And this is the word which proceeded from the mouth of an uneducated son of the desert. Had it not been the wise Word of God, the educated and the worldly-wise

would not thus have been driven to their wits' end and failing at last to realize the true sense with their imperfect reason objected to the passages where treasures of wisdom lay concealed. From this we see that when worldly wisdom fails to discover the true meaning of a point which is afterwards shown to be pregnant with meaning, it only bears a strong testimony to the superhuman origin of the words. Such has been the case with regard to the oaths of the Holy Qur'an which were considered as weak and vulnerable points, but now when the mystery has been solved and light has been thrown upon their true signification, all intelligent persons would derive pleasure from reflecting on this point.

The Holy Qur'an has also resorted to the form of an oath in another place when describing the need and truth of revelation by appealing to the laws of nature. Thus it says: والسماء ذات الرجع والارض ذات الصدع انه لقول فصل وما هو بالهزل 'Consider the cloud pouring rain, and the earth splitting (with plants); most surely it is a decisive word, and it is no joke.' (lxxxvi ; 11-14), i.e., it is not uncalled for and unneeded but like timely rain has come in its time. Here Almighty God calls attention to

His manifest law in the form of an oath as a testimony for the truth of the revelation of the Holy Qur'an. We see plainly in the laws of nature that rain comes down from heaven in the time of need. The greenness and verdure of the earth depend upon heavenly rain and if it ceases for a time the water in the upper strata of the earth gradually dries up. Thus we see that there is an attraction between the heavenly and the earthly waters. Revelation stands in the same relation to human reason as heavenly water does to the earthly water. As with the cessation of heavenly water earthly water begins gradually to dry up, so also is the case with human reason which without the heavenly revelation loses its purity and strength. When, therefore, a long period of time elapses without witnessing the appearance of any inspired one of God, it is but natural that reason like earthly water should become noxious and impure.

As an illustration of this principle we may cast a glance at the pre-Islamic time. Immediately before the appearance of the Holy Prophet darkness prevailed everywhere. About six hundred years had passed since the appearance of Jesus Christ and during this long

interval no great magnetiser and inspired one of God had made his appearance. The whole world witnessed to a falling off from purity and virtue, and corrupt ideas prevailed generally. This was due to no other reason but to the discontinuance of revelation for such a long time. Reason and not revelation governed the heavenly kingdom and on account of its imperfection and corruption led people astray. The earthly water of human reason dried up because the heavenly water of inspiration had not come down upon earth for such a long time.

This is the secret underlying the oaths of the Holy Qur'an. Almighty God directs the attention of men to His manifest law that the earth's bringing forth of vegetable and verdure depends upon the heavenly rain. This manifest law unrolls the secret law relating to revelation. Reason alone should not be trusted to, for its own existence is liable to pass away if revelation does not afford it nourishment. During the time when an inspired one of God is living upon the earth his benevolence extends to all, and human reason is generally brightened and sharpened in a marked degree. There is a general search after truth and an animation and activity of all the dormant faculties is

observable. Such development of reason and zeal of the heart are the result of the blessed appearance of one who is a recipient of revelation. When you see, therefore, that there is a general search after truth and that every one has stood up in the search of religion, know it for certain that heavenly water has been poured down upon earth and that Divine revelation has illumined some faithful heart.

THE SOURCES OF DIVINE KNOWLEDGE

Having regard to the limited time allowed to me in this gathering and to the comprehensiveness with which the Holy Qur'an has treated this subject I shall make myself as brief as possible. The Holy Qur'an has described three degrees of knowledge as already shown in commenting upon the *Sura Takasur*, viz., علم اليقين و عين اليقين and حق اليقين. Of these the علم اليقين is the knowledge of a thing acquired inferentially as we conclude the existence of fire from the presence of smoke in a place without witnessing the fire itself. But if we see the fire itself, our knowledge of the existence of fire is a certainty of the second degree, viz., عين اليقين. Our knowledge of a thing which we witness with the eye may, however be, further improved upon by bringing it home to our own experience; for instance by thrusting our hand into the fire in the above case. Then we reach the highest stage of certainty which, in the language of the Holy Qur'an, is حق اليقين. The *sura* which describes

these three stages of knowledge has already been quoted and commented upon.

The sources which give rise to a knowledge of certainty are reason and information. With reference to those whose abode shall be hell the Holy Qur'an says: و قالوا لوكنا نسمع او نعقل ماكنا في اصحاب السعير 'And they shall say: Had we but listened or pondered (to the discourses of the wise or been ourselves wise and tested religion and belief by reason) we should not have been among the inmates of the burning fire'. (lxvii. 10). The same purport is elsewhere expressed in the Holy Qur'an in the words: لا يكلف الله نفسا الا وسعها 'Allah does not impose upon any soul a duty but to the extent of its ability', (ii; 286). In this verse Almighty God gives us clearly to understand that the doctrines and beliefs to which He invites people through His messengers are only such as are within the capacity of human understanding and knowledge and He does not force them to bear any burden which is beyond their strength. The verses quoted above also point to the fact that a person can acquire the knowledge of certainty through accurate information. For instance, we have not seen London but still we are certain of the existence of a town of this

name because we cannot disbelieve all those who have seen it. Or, although we did not live in the time of Aurangzeb nor did we ever see him, still it is beyond the shadow of a doubt that Aurangzeb was one of the Moghul Emperors who reigned in India. Thus we can arrive at a certain conclusion as to the reality of a fact or the existence of a thing through hearing when the chain of testimony is unbroken. The inspiration of the prophets is a source of knowledge provided that there has been no interruption in its transmission and the vehicle which conveys it to us is not of an imperfect nature. But if there are fifty or seventy different accounts of a single narrative contradicting each other and the documents containing them all pretend to be based on revelation, the mere acceptance by any sect of some of these documents as of a heavenly origin and the condemnation of the rest as spurious and fabricated if not based on a critical enquiry does not lead to a certain knowledge of the truth of the facts therein related. A series of such narratives inconsistent with each other is utterly incredible and we need no other proof for their condemnation. Nor can they, when wanting in consistency, the great test of the truth of a fact, be the source of knowledge

because they cannot give rise to any certain conclusion, being themselves doubtful.

In connection with these remarks it should be borne in mind that the truth of the Holy Qur'an does not depend merely on its uninterrupted transmission and authenticity for it proceeds on the argumentative line. It does not compel us to accept its doctrines, principles and commandments simply on the authority of revelation but appeals to reason in man and gives arguments for what it inculcates. It is to this fact that the Holy Qur'an alludes when it says that the principles which it inculcates are impressed in the nature of man as we have in the verse: هذا ذكر مبارك 'This is a blessed Reminder'. (xxi; 50) i.e., this blessed Book does not preach strange and novel doctrines but it is a remembrance of that which is impressed in the nature of man and the laws of nature. It also says: لا اكراه في الدين 'There is no compulsion in religion'. (ii. 256) i.e., it does not compel a man to accept its doctrines but offers reasons for their acceptance. Besides, the Holy Qur'an has the spiritual property of giving light to the heart as it says: شفاء لما في الصدور 'A healing for what is in the breasts'. (x; 57) i.e., the Holy

Qur'an is a cure for all spiritual ailments. The Holy Qur'an is, therefore, not a book which derives all its force from being an ancient document which has been handed down to us through a safe course of transmission but its real force lies in the sound arguments which it produces and the clear light which it sheds.

In like manner, intellectual arguments which have a sound basis lead a man to a knowledge of certainty. To this the Holy Qur'an alludes in the following verses: ان في
خلق السموات و الارض و اختلاف الليل
و النهار لا ولى الالباب الذين يذكرون الله
قياما و قعودا و على جنوبهم و يتفكرون
في خلق السموات و الارض ربنا ما خلقت
هذا باطلا سبحانك فقنا عذاب النار
'Most surely in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day there are signs for men of understanding, those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: Our Lord! Thou hast not created this in vain! glory be to Thee! save us then from the chastisement of the fire.' (iii ; 189,190).

Conscience which in the Holy Word of God is called human nature, is also a source of knowledge. Almighty God says in the Holy Qur'an: فطرة الله التى فطر الناس عليها 'The nature made by Allah in which He has made men' (xxx ; 30). This impression in the nature of man makes him regard Almighty God as one without any partner, the Creator of every thing, and free from subjection to death and birth. Although the knowledge derived from human nature does not appear to be inferential, yet we have called human nature a source of knowledge because it leads to a conclusion by a very fine thread of inference. Almighty God has charged every thing with a peculiar property which it is difficult to describe in definite words, but when we imagine it and reflect over it, the inherent property at once strikes the mind. If, for instance, we imagine the person of the Divine Being and ponder over the attributes we desire to place in Him and consider whether He should undergo the process of birth and death and suffering like ourselves, the idea makes us shudder. Human nature revolts at it and recoils from it being unable to bear it. The idea is repellent. The still small voice within us at once speaks out that the God in Whose powers we

must completely trust must be a perfect and Almighty Being free from every blemish and defect. The idea of God and of the Unity of God co-exist in human nature and the one is not separable from the other. It is for this reason that I have described conscience, or more properly human nature, as a source of knowledge.

But we can attain to a higher degree of certainty than that which has been described above through عين اليقين which means a direct knowledge of a thing as, for instance, in the material world we obtain the knowledge of a scent through the sense of smell, that of sapidity through the muscles of taste and that of tangibility through the organs of touch. All these experiences fall under the heading of عين اليقين. But with respect to the life to come our knowledge attains this degree when we are directly inspired by God, hear His sweet voice and see His glorious revelations. Undoubtedly we cannot attain to a perfect knowledge of God except through inspiration. Moreover we feel this desire, this thirst for inspiration, in our hearts which is inexplicable unless we admit that Almighty God has beforehand provided the means of its satisfaction.

Can we, in the present life which is the only gauge of the next and a nursery of it, remain contented with a blind faith based on tales and legends regarding the existence of the true, perfect, all-powerful and living God, or be satisfied with the insufficient research of reason which has hitherto given to the world only an imperfect and deficient knowledge of the Divine Being? Do not the lovers of God desire it, heart and soul, that they should enjoy the bliss of speaking to their Beloved One? Can they who have lost everything for the sake of God and forsaken all their worldly interests, may give their heart and soul for the sake of their Divine Master, be content to stand in a dim light never to see the brilliant face of that shining Sun of righteousness? Is it not true that the sweet words 'I am' of the living God give a better knowledge of His existence than all the reasoning of the philosophers; so much so that all their colossal literature proving the existence of God by the insufficient light of reason is nothing compared with these words? What light can be expected from the person who himself never comes out of darkness?

In short if Almighty God has willed to give a perfect knowledge of His Ownself to the

seekers after truth, He has not shut the doors through which they may be illumined by His word and revelation. In this connection the Holy Qur'an teaches the following prayer to the seekers after truth : اهدنا الصراط المستقيم صراط الذين انعمت عليهم '(O Lord), guide us on the right path (of perseverance), the path of those upon whom Thou hast bestowed favours.' (1; 5—6). The blessings here referred to signify the heavenly blessings which a man receives directly from God such as inspiration, revelation, etc. Almighty God says in another place in the Holy Qur'an : ان الذين قالوا ربنا الله ثم استقاموا تتنزل عليهم الملائكة الا تخافوا ولا تحزنوا وابشروا بالجنة التى كنتم توعدون '(As for) those who say, Our Lord is Allah, then continue in the right way, the angels descend upon them, saying: Fear not, nor be grieved, and receive good news of the garden which you were promised.' (xli ; 30). This verse plainly indicates that the righteous servants of God are inspired by God in fear and grief and angels are sent down for their consolation. So also, in another verse Almighty God says : لهم البشرى فى الحيوة الدنيا و فى الاخرة 'They shall have

good news in this world's life and in the hereafter.' (x ; 64).

Before proceeding further it is necessary to remove a misconception regarding *Ilhám* (inspiration). *Ilhám* does not mean that an idea is infused into the mind of a person who sets himself to think about a thing. A mere poet is not inspired in the theological sense when brilliant ideas flash upon him as he sits down to make verses. In this case there is no distinction between good and bad. When the mental powers are applied to a subject, new ideas will flash upon the mind according to the genius of the thinker and without any regard to the good or bad nature of the subject. If the word *Ilhám* is taken to mean the occurring on a particular occasion of new ideas, a thief or a dacoit or a murderer may as well be called *Mulham* (the inspired one of God) on account of the ingenious plans which suggest themselves to his mischief-making mind for the perpetration of evil deeds. Such a view of *Ilhám* (inspiration) is held by men who are quite ignorant of the true God who with His word gives peace and consolation to hearts and knowledge of spiritual truth to those who are not aware of them. What is *Ilhám* (inspiration) then? It is the

living and powerful Word of God in which He speaks to or addresses one of his servants whom He has chosen or intends to choose from among all people. When such conversation or utterances run on continually in a regular method not being insufficient or fragmentary or enveloped in the darkness of evil ideas, and have a heavenly bliss, wisdom and power in them, they are the Word of God with which He comforts His servant and reveals Himself to him. It is no doubt true that words are spoken sometimes to a man by way of trial and then they are not accompanied with the perfection and blessings necessary to a true inspiration. In this early stage a person is tried and he will either stumble on account of the weakness of the flesh or, having tasted of the sweet and life-giving fountain of inspiration, transform himself and make himself like those who are truly inspired. If he does not walk in true righteousness like the faithful servants of God he is deprived of the favour and has nothing but vanity in his heart.

It should, moreover, be remembered that all those who receive inspiration are not of equal rank in the sight of God. Even the prophets, whose inspiration stands far above the inspiration

of other men on account of its clearness, force and excellence, are not all upon the same level. As Almighty God says: تلك الرسل فضلنا بعضهم على بعض 'We have made some of these apostles to excel the others.' (ii. 253). From this it appears that inspiration is merely a grace of God and does not interfere with the exaltation of degrees, for the latter depends upon the sincerity, devotion and faithfulness of a person towards God. Divine inspiration, if accompanied with all its requisites, is no doubt also a fruit of these qualities. If an answer comes to a man when he entreats his Divine Master, and there is no break or irregularity in the answers vouchsafed by the Divine Being to His servant and the word is accompanied with Divine majesty and light and reveals the deep secrets of the future and hidden truths, there is no doubt that the word is Divine inspiration. It is necessary that between the recipient of such an inspiration and the Divine Being there should be a very close connection such as exists in conversation between two familiar friends. When he addresses his prayers to Almighty God, an answer may be vouchsafed to him in sweet and eloquent words proceeding from the Divine Being and not as the result of his own

desires or of any deliberation or reflection on his part. He should be continually graced with such words and answers. Then is surely the word which comes to him, the Word of God and he has honour in the Divine presence. But this gift of pure and living words, revealed with clearness from God and not mixed with low desires, is not granted to any but those whose hearts are marked with a high degree of faith and sincerity and virtuous deeds and that which cannot be described in words. A true and pure inspiration reveals mighty wonders of Divinity. Very often an effulgent light is created and with it comes a bright and majestic inspiration. What greater blessing or happiness can be conceived than speaking to the Creator of the earth and heavens and being spoken to by Him? In this world the face of God is revealed by His Word and, therefore, such a man enjoys the favour of His sight.

It should, however, be noticed that the mere utterance of words and phrases not distinctly recognized as having come from God, does not fall under the heading of Divine inspiration. A person who finds himself in this condition is really tried by God. For Almighty God sometimes tries men who are remiss and negligent in

the performance of their duties towards Him by infusing certain words or phrases into their hearts or causing them to be uttered from their lips with respect to which they are like blind men not knowing whether the words come from God or Satan. For a person who is thus tried by God it is meet that he should repent and turn to God and reform himself. But the righteous man to whom the doors of Divine revelation are thrown wide open and who is spoken to by God openly in words which have light, sweetness, majesty, deep significance and more than mortal wisdom in them, whose entreaties and supplications are answered by the Almighty as often as they are urged, who when perfectly awake has addressed his supplications to the Almighty repeatedly, say ten or twenty times on a single occasion, and received answers thereto, whose prayers are accepted hundreds of times, who has been informed of excellent truths, nice points and deep secrets of the future on numerous occasions by means of the inspiration which he receives, the person upon whom these favours are showered must be thankful to God and devote himself wholly to His path for, him He has chosen out of His rich grace and mercy and him He has made an heir

to all the blessings which He granted to the righteous before. But this highest Divine favour is granted seldom and to very few, and those to whom it is granted consider every other blessing as naught in comparison with this.

It is among the Muhammadans that individuals have always been raised to this spiritual eminence. Islam is in fact the only religion in which God approaches His servant and speaks to him and within him. He makes His habitation within his heart and draws him up to heaven. He grants him all the blessings which He granted to the righteous before him. Ah! the world is blind and does not know what a man may attain to if he comes nearer and nearer to God. The people of the world do not take a single step to attain the nearness of God; but him who is a pilgrim in this path they either declare an heretic or worship as God. Both classes are guilty of an iniquity; the one for its excessive hatred and the other for its excessive love. But the wise man should adopt the mean course, neither rejecting him whom God has chosen for this eminence nor bowing down before him whom God has created as before the Creator Himself. The mantle of Divinity is cast upon the person who is thus favoured by God and he

becomes a looking-glass for the image of the Divine Being. This is the secret of the words spoken by the Holy Prophet: 'Whoever has seen me, has seen God.' This is the final stage in the spiritual progress of a man, the goal where all his labours end, and rest and satisfaction are granted to the pilgrim.

I shall be guilty of a great injustice if I hide the fact that I have been raised to this spiritual eminence. Almighty God has favoured me with His certain word and chosen me that I may give sight to the blind, lead the seekers to the object of their search and give to the acceptors of truth the glad tidings of the pure fountain which is talked of among many but is found by very few. I assure the hearers that, except by following the Holy Qur'an, no one can find the true God in whom lies the salvation of man and eternal bliss. It is my heart's inmost desire that others shall see what I have seen and hear what I have heard; that they shall forsake vain stories and run to accept the truth. That perfect source of knowledge which brings one to the noble presence of God, that pure heavenly water which washes off all doubts, that looking-glass through which the face of God is revealed, is the Word of God, the Divine

inspiration to which I have called attention. I say truly that if the soul desires it earnestly and the heart yearns after it, people should seek this way and set out in search of this path. But how can this way be opened and the veil of ignorance removed? I assure all seekers after truth that it is Islam only which promises this happy goal to the wayfafer and gives the glad tidings of this path of salvation. With all other people the way is closed to Divine inspiration and to the followers of the Holy Prophet only it is open. But rest assured that Almighty God has not barred entrance to this way ; such views are simply the invention of those who are themselves deprived of this heavenly blessing. Know it for certain also that as you cannot see without eyes and hear without ears and speak without tongue, in the same way you cannot see the face of the Beloved one without the Holy Qur'an. I was a young man and now I am old but I have never seen a man who has drunk to satisfaction of the pure fountain of knowledge except from this source.

Bear in mind that no one can fight with God or frustrate His designs. Remember that the only means to a perfect Divine knowledge is Divine inspiration, a blessing granted to the

prophets of God. But Almighty God Whose grace is bounteous has never willed that He should close the door to this Divine gift and thus destroy the world. The gates are still wide open through which a man can find entrance to the heavenly blessings of Divine inspiration and revelation. But to seek it, walk in the proper path and then you will find it. That water of life came down from heaven and accumulated in a grand receptacle. To drink of it you must reach it, stumbling and falling, and apply your lips to the cool and refrigerant water of life. In this consists the felicity of man that he should run to the spot where any trace is given of the heavenly light and walk in the way in which he finds any trace of the friend whom he seeks. As light comes from heaven and sheds its lustre upon earth, the true light of guidance also comes from heaven. It is not through talk or conjectures that a man can attain to the source of true Divine knowledge. Are your eyes of any avail to you in total darkness? If they are, then may your reason alone be a guide to a perfect knowledge of God. The true God is not the god whose lips are sealed and who is, therefore, obliged to leave us to our own conjectures concerning Him. Nay the perfect and

living God has ever been giving unmistakable signs of His existence and He has even now willed to vouchsafe such signs to the present generation. The time is come when the doors of heaven shall be opened and the dawn is about to break forth. Blessed are they who rise up and seek the true God, the God Whom no adversity can overtake and no revolution of time can affect and Whose lustre of glory never grows dim. He says in the Holy Qur'an : الله نور السموات والارض *i. e.*, 'Allah is the light of the heavens and the earth.' (xxiv. 35). It is from Him that all light proceeds. He is the sun of the sun and the life of all life, the true and living God. Blessed is he who accepts Him.

The third source of knowledge is that which is perfect in the highest degree and makes a man realize the truth of the certainty of Divine existence. These are the adversities and hardships which the prophets of God and the righteous are made to suffer from the hands of their enemies or by a heavenly decree. Sufferings make a man realize the full force of the legal injunctions which are thus illustrated in his practical life. Religious dogmas are mere theories and their perfection consists in their practice. The person who undergoes great

sufferings has an occasion to apply the treasures of knowledge which are accumulated in his heart, to actual circumstances of life and by their right application he becomes, as it were, a perfect embodiment of Divine guidance. The moral qualities, of whose knowledge the brain and the heart are the sole depositaries at first, are displayed by actual practice in all the external and internal faculties, and forgiveness, revenge, patience, mercy, etc., are not mere names to him but realities which he has felt and seen and which thus make an impression upon his external and internal nature. On this point Almighty God says in the Holy Qur'an: ولنبلونكم بشيء من الخوف والجوع ونقص من الاموال والانفس والثمرات وبشر الصابرين الذين اذا اصابتهم مصيبة قالوا انا لله وانا اليه راجعون اولئك عليهم صلوات من ربهم ورحمة واولئك هم المهتدون 'And We will most certainly try you with somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits; and give good news to the patient, who, when a misfortune befalls them, say: Surely we are Allah's, and to Him we shall surely return. Those are they on whom are blessings and mercy from their Lord, and those

are the followers of the right course'. (ii; 155-157). Here we are told that there is no very great excellence in the mere knowledge which is treasured in the heart or brain, but the knowledge to be valued is that which, on account of its application in the practical course of life, gives a colouring to the whole of man. To strengthen and improve one's knowledge the best means, therefore, is its application in practice so that its impression is left not only upon the brain but upon every faculty and limb. In fact every sort of knowledge, however low its comparative value, is defective so long as unattended by practice. It is to this point that in the verses quoted above Almighty God calls our attention. We are told that our morals are not actually formed unless they are proved by sufferings and trials which stand to them in the relation of practice to knowledge. The remaining portion of the verses above quoted may be thus translated: لتبلون في اموالكم وانفسكم ولتسمعن من الذين اوتوا الكتاب من قبلكم ومن الذين اشركوا اذى كثيرا وان تصبروا وتتقوا فان ذالك من عزم الامور 'You shall certainly be tried respecting your wealth (*i.e.*, you shall be robbed of your properties and put

to death), and your souls, and you shall certainly hear from those who have been given the Book before you and from those who are polytheists much annoying talk (*i.e.*, you shall suffer at their hands); and if you are patient and guard (against evil), surely this is one of the affairs (which should be) determined upon' (iii; 185). All these verses show conclusively that knowledge is not perfect and fruitful without its practical application. Knowledge which is at its best in practice is a source of blessings, but that which never passes into the domain of the practical has no value.

The application of knowledge in practice is what makes a man attain the degree of حق اليقين in his knowledge, for the truth of the certainty of a thing cannot be realized unless every side of it is put to the practical test. This is what happened in Islam. Whatever injunctions were contained in the Holy Qur'an were beutifully illustrated in practice in the life of the Holy Prophet and his companions who were thus enlightened with true light. For the fulfilment of this purpose Almighty God divided the life of our Holy Prophet into two distinct periods: the period of sufferings, adversities and persecutions and the period of triumph and

prosperity. This was done in order to give him an occasion for the display of both sorts of moral qualities, viz., those which can be proved in time of suffering and those which cannot be proved except in triumph and prosperity. In this way the Holy Prophet had all his moral qualities brought to the test of practice and the two-fold condition of his life enabled him to display all the noble moral qualities in the highest degree. The thirteen years at Mecca represent the time of suffering, and a study of the circumstances of his life at that time shows clearly that there was not a single moral quality which could be manifested in the time of suffering by the righteous that was not displayed by the Holy Prophet. His complete trust in God, his refraining from showing the slightest impatience, his calm and serene mode, his noble and dignified manners, his unshaken activity and zeal in the performance of the duties entrusted to him, his perseverance, his fearlessness of his enemies and numerous other moral qualities so deeply impressed even the unbelievers that they bore testimony to the great miracle of his perseverance under the hardest trials and sufferings and were convinced that this was because of his whole trust in God. Then followed the life of the Prophet at Medina, a

period of triumph, victory and prosperity, suited for the display of the second division of morals. His forgiveness of injuries, charity, courage and other such morals were so well displayed during this period that large numbers of the unbelievers became converts to Islam on seeing them. He freely forgave those who had persecuted and tortured him, gave shelter to those who had expelled him from Mecca, enriched the poor among them and forgave his bitterest foes when their lives were completely at his mercy. The Divine morals thus displayed by the Holy Prophet convinced the Arabs that their possessor could not but be from God and a truly righteous man. Their inveterate hatred was by these noble morals at once converted into fast friendship.

One of these great and noble moral qualities is thus described in the Holy Qur'an: قل إن صلوتي و نسكي و محياي و مماتي لله رب العالمين 'Say: Surely my prayer and my sacrifice and my life and my death are (all) for Allah, the Lord of the worlds'. (vi; 163). i.e., for the manifestation of the Divine glory and for the welfare and benefit of mankind so that with his death a life might be granted to them. It should not be imagined that death in the way

of God and for the good of mankind here spoken of means that the prophet was under the delusion like ignorant and mad men that a suicidal end of his own life would in any way benefit others. Nay, the Holy Prophet hated all such ideas and the Holy Qur'an regards the person who entertains such ideas as guilty of a serious crime and says in plain words : ولا تلقوا با يد يكم الى التهلكة 'Cast not yourselves to perdition with your own hands'. (ii. 195). It is a plain truth that one man cannot relieve another of headache by breaking his own head. Such a step is at the best an act of foolishness. In short, the reference to the Prophet's death in the way of God and for the benefit of mankind simply denotes that the Holy Prophet had devoted his life out of sympathy for the welfare of mankind, and with his prayers and preaching and the adoption of every wise method for the regeneration of his people, as well as by bearing patiently their persecutions, he had sacrificed his life and all his comforts in this path. With reference to this sacrifice of his life the Holy Qur'an elsewhere says : لعلك باخع نفسك الا يكونوا مؤمنين i.e. 'Perhaps you will kill yourself with grief because they do not

believe' (xxvi; 3); and again فلا تذهب نفسك عليهم حسرات 'So let not your soul waste away in grief for them' (xxxv; 9). The way in which a man may sacrifice his life for his people is, therefore, to encounter all difficulties and work hard for their welfare by adopting measures which are likly to better their condition. It is mere folly to think that true sacrifice for a people who are deeply immersed in sin or involved in error consists in committing suicide. To regard this act of folly as leading to the salvation of those who are gone astray is the height of absurdity. It betrays, if not want of sense, at least a weakness of character and the absence of moral courage. It is the faint-hearted man who seeks a shelter in death from the difficulties which he is unable to face. In whatever way may that suicide be explained afterwards it cannot be doubted that it is an act of folly combined with weakness of mind.

Now for a complete display of high morals, a man must have been both in straitened and well-to-do circumstances. If he has always been persecuted and subjected only to sufferings and hardships and has never had an occasion of

wreaking his vengeance on his enemies, he cannot be said to possess the quality of forgiveness of injuries. What he would have done, if he had the power to avenge himself on his enemies, is impossible to ascertain. To know, therefore, that a man possessed high moral qualities it is not sufficient to know that he showed meekness and forbearance when he was powerless against his enemies and persecuted by them but also that he freely forgave those enemies when he was completely triumphant over them and when they were soley at his mercy. If he never went into a field of battle, his courage would be a moot point and we cannot say whether he would have shown martial daring or cowardice. If he never saw affluence, it is difficult to say whether he would have amassed riches or given them in charity if he had ever possessed them. But the grace of God granted the Holy Prophet suitable opportunities for the display of all sorts of morals such as meekness, charity, courage, forgiveness, justice, etc., in a highly excellent degree which is without a parallel in history.

It is true that forgiveness was not extended to the implacable foes of Islam who were bent upon its extirpation and who ruthlessly butchered innocent Muslims or put them to excruciating

tortures and cruel persecutions. Pardon to them would have meant the annihilation of the righteous ones. The object of the wars undertaken by the Muslims at the bidding of the Prophet was not to cause bloodshed. They had been expelled from their homes to seek shelter elsewhere and many innocent Muslim men and women had been murdered in cold blood. But their relentless persecutors had not stopped there. In obedience to the Divine commandment of self-defence the sword was allowed to be taken up against those who had drawn the sword for the utter extirpation of Islam. The object of these wars was, therefore, to remedy an evil by abating the bloodshed caused by the persecutors of the Muslims. Had Islam not defended itself under these circumstances against the outrage of its persecutors, the result would have been the slaughter of hundreds of innocent lives including children and women and thus it would have been nipped in the bud.

The error of our opponents lies in a misconception of the attributes of the Divine Being. They think that a Divinely revealed Law should on no account and under no circumstances whatever enjoin a resistance of evil or the punishment of evil-doers and

that Divine love and mercy should not be manifested except in the form of meekness. With them the most reverential attitude towards the Divine Being consists in limiting His perfect attributes to humbleness and lowliness. This is a serious error. Anyone who can think for himself will easily see that the Divine laws of nature though they are a mercy for mankind are not always manifested in a mild and gentle form. The Divine physician out of His infinite mercy gives us sometimes the sweet syrup to drink and out of His mercy too administers the bitter dose on other occasions. Both are different manifestations of His mercy. Thus it is His mercy which requires that the wicked should be destroyed when He sees that they aim at the extirpation of the righteous and act corruptly in the earth and shed innocent blood. For this purpose He sends punishment upon the wicked either from earth or from heaven for He is as wise as He is merciful. Praise be to God who is the Lord of worlds.